

the two knights defence



EVERYMAN CHESS

Jan Pinski

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by Jan Pinsky

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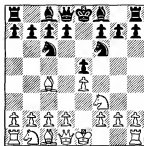
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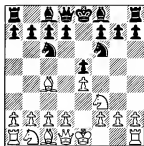
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INTRODUCTION



'You should speculate in two cases. When you have reasons to do so, or when you don't,' said Mark Twain. It is similar with the Two Knights Defence. You can play it when you have a reason for doing so, and when you don't. Why? Well, if nothing else, it leads to interesting play. For a club player it is a good weapon even against very strong players and also against weaker players. Black is just obliged to know what he is doing as soon as he has played (1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♙c6 3 ♘c4) 3...♘f6. Finally, but not lastly, the Two Knights Defence is a kind of intellectual relic in chess. Every chess player should know something about this opening – otherwise he has no chess culture. 3...♘f6 was already played in 15th century, which makes the Two Knights Defence for chess what Rome is for the Western civilization!

A few notes about the opening

4 d3 looks very innocent, but is still played by many top grandmasters; for example, World Champion Vladimir Kramnik, the 2002 European Champion Bartłomiej Macieja, Grandmaster Leonid Yudasin, and so on. The most important thing to remember is the following plan in the main line (4...♙e7 5 0-0 0-0 6 ♞e1 d6 7 c3): ...♜h8, ...♙g8, and ...f7-f5, even if it means sacrificing pawns.

Another unforcing line is 4 d4 exd4 5 e5. This variation has, in my opinion, the greatest future of all those in this book. Here Black has two less well-known continuations (5...♙g4 and 5...♙e4), which he should try out. Secondly, White has some sidelines which gives a good basis for independent investigations.

The move 4 ♙g5 rose from the dead in the 1990's, woken to life by Grandmasters Alexander Morozevich and Nigel Short. It is quite an interesting variation. If you are a hard-working chess player you can seriously hope to get your work returned by good results here for White. Almost all those who play this position as Black are not so well acquainted with the actual theory. Many variations give White the chance to win the game from home through dedicated preparation.

And then there is 4 ♙g5 ♙c5!?. Now what is this? Leaving f7 unguarded like a beginner falling for the fool's mate? Not really. These days nobody normal plays Traxler's attack regu-

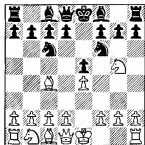
larly with Black. Still it is a tricky line that cannot be completely dismissed just on account of opening theory.

I hope the Two Knights Defence will bring you pleasure, be you Black or White.

Jan Pinski,
Warsaw,
December 2003.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 b5



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5

All chess books teach us that we should not move the same piece twice in opening, and in most cases this is good advice. However, 4 ♖g5 is definitely a correct move. Why? There is one important reason: the f7-pawn (like the f2-pawn) is Black's biggest weakness in the first few moves of the open game (1 e4 e5). So White breaks the rule about moving the same piece, but in so doing attacks Black's biggest weakness. That is the secret!

In this chapter we consider the position after 4...d5 5 exd5 b5, which is a minor alternative to the main line 5...♗a5, but still interesting. An important point is that 5...b5 6 ♗f1! ♖d4 leads to Chapter 2.

The most natural move. There is only one alternative: 4...♗c5!? – the Traxler Gambit (see Chapter 5). 4...♖xc4? has never been played by anyone good. Black hopes for 5 ♖xf7?! (5 ♖xe4 d5) 5...♞h4 6 0-0 ♖xf2 7 ♞xf2 ♗c5 with a strong initiative. But 5 ♗xf7+ is the strongest move and after 5...♞c7 6 d4! h6 7 ♖xe4 ♞xf7 8 d5 White is much better.

5 exd5

Here Black has three good options: 5...♗a5 (Chapters 3 and 4), and two very similar moves, 5...b5 (see below) and its twin brother 5...♖d4 (the Fritz Variation) which have a common main line covered in Chapter 2.

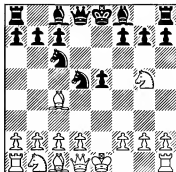
Weak is 5...♖xd5? and now:

Game 1 Bahram-Hector *Stockholm 1998*

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6

The living legend, grandmaster David Bronstein, thinks that this opening should be called Chigorin's Counter-Attack rather than the Two Knights Defence! Bronstein believes firmly in the strength of Black's last move.

4 ♖g5 d5

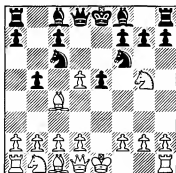


a) 6 d4xf7! ? gives White has a very strong attack after 6... xf7 7 f3+ c6 8 c3 b4 (8... c7!) 9 d4 c6 10 g5 h6 11 xc7 xc7 12 0-0-0 f8 13 c4 g5+ 14 b1 f4 15 xc5+ f7 16 xd5 cxd5 17 xd5+ f8 18 b3 f5 19 c4 g6 20 h4 and White has a completely won position according to old maestros Mises and Bardeleben) 9 c4 c6 10 a3 a6 11 d4 c7 12 f4 f7 13 xe5 and the white attack is very strong according to grandmaster Reuben Fine. 13 0-0-0! is also interesting.

But the piece sacrifice is not necessary for White to obtain the advantage...

b) 6 d4! exd4 (or 6... c7 7 dxf7! xf7 8 f3+ c6 9 c3 b4 10 c4 c6 11 a3 a6 12 xe5+ f7 13 xd5 cxd5 14 xd5+ f8 15 0-0 with a huge advantage for White) 7 0-0 e6 (if 7... c7 8 dxf7 xf7 9 f3+ e6 10 c3! dxc3 11 e1+ e5 12 f4 f6 13 xe5 xe5 14 xe5+ xe5 15 e1+ d4 16 xd5 e8 17 d3+ c5 18 b4+ cxb4 19 d4+ and White won in Morphy-NN, New Orleans 1858) 8 e1 d7 9 dxf7 xf7 10 f3+ g8 11 e6 d8 12 g5 xe6 13 xd8 e1+ 14 f1 e6 15 h4 and White is much better according to Euwe.

5... b5! ?



This very interesting idea is copyrighted by the American master Olav Ulvestad, who wrote an article about this move in 'Chess Review' in 1941/1. To this Yakov Estrin

commented: 'If someone can come up with such a new sound plan in a position which has been known for 500 years, it seems that chess is truly immortal!'

6 dxc6!

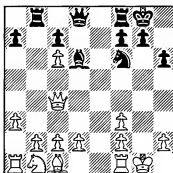
After this move White is actually fighting to say alive. The paradoxical 6 f1 is the main move here and will be explained in Game 4. 6 xb5! has also been played, but it is weaker, as can be seen in Games 2 & 3.

6... bxc4

Now White has the following possibilities:
7 c3

Best, but insufficient for equality.

The alternative is 7 e2! h6! (also possible is 7... d5 8 f4 h6 9 xe5+ xe5+ 10 fxe5 hxg5 11 exf6 gxf6 12 c3 d6 and Black is slightly better) 8 xe5+ e7 9 d3 0-0 10 0-0 g4 11 f4 d6 with a better position for Black whose attack is very dangerous. This was shown in the game Berger-Zweiberg, corr. 1963-64, which continued 12 xc4 xf3 13 gxf3 b8 14 a3



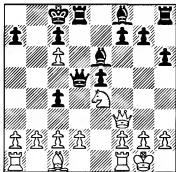
14... b5! ? (perhaps this is not the best plan, but it is definitely the most impressive) 15 xb5 d5! 16 c4 (after 16 xd5 hxh2+ 17 c2 d5 Black has a strong attack with at least perpetual check. White is of course some material up, but it is sitting idly on the queenside) 16... f4 17 h1 e8 18 g1! (it is more difficult to defend than to attack; here White underestimates the strength of Black's attack or else misses some

detail) 18...♖h4 19 ♖f1 (if 19 ♖d4 g6! 20 d3 ♖h3! and Black wins) 19...♗d3 20 f4 ♗xf2+ 21 ♖g2 ♖c5 and White resigned. 18 d3 was the best move and if now 18...♖h4? 19 ♗c3! ♖h3 20 ♖xf4 ♖xf3+ 21 ♖g1 ♖xf4 22 ♖d5 and White wins. Instead after 18...♗g5 19 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 20 ♖g1 ♖h4 21 ♖g3 ♖e1+ 22 ♖g2 ♖xg3 23 ♖xh4 ♖xh4 Black has compensation for the pawns. It is actually likely that he is better here as White has no way to mobilise his pieces.

7...h6 8 ♘g4

White has no easy choices here. Also possible is 8 ♗f3 ♖d6 9 ♖e2 0-0 10 0-0 and according to *ECO* Black has compensation for the material. This is definitely the case. After something like 10...♖e8 White has a difficult game in front of him, e.g. 11 ♖xc4? e4 12 ♗e1 ♖xh2! 13 ♖xh2 ♗g4+ 14 ♖g3 h5! 15 ♖b4 h4+ 16 ♖h3 a5 17 ♖a3 ♗e3+ 18 ♖h2 ♗xf1+ 19 ♖g1 ♗xd2 and Black wins. 9 0-0 might be an improvement, but still Black has a very dangerous attack.

8...♗xe4 9 ♗xe4 ♖d5 10 ♖f3 ♖e6 11 0-0 0-0!



After the feeble 11...♖e7 White would have time to complete his mobilisation in peace.

12 ♖e1?!

This basically just loses a tempo. Better was 12 b3 ♖xc6 13 bxc4 f5 14 ♗g5 ♖xf3 15 ♗xf3 ♖xc4 16 d3 e4 17 dxc4 exf3 and Black is slightly better.

12...♖xc6 13 b3 f5 14 ♗c3?!

The uncomfortable 14 ♗g5 e4 15 ♖h3 was necessary, when Black can try 15...hxg5!? (or 15...♖b4 16 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 when the game is unclear) 16 ♖xh8 ♖c5 with strong compensation.

14...e4 15 ♖h5?!

White is surfing around with the queen as if it was the Internet. Better was 15 ♖e2 ♖d6 with an attack.

15...♖c5 16 bxc4 g6! 17 ♖e2?

17 ♖h4 was better, but the position is very uncomfortable. The white pieces are not playing at all.

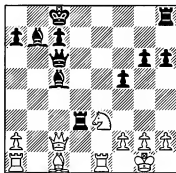
17...♖xc4!

Now Black wins.

18 d3

If 18 ♖xc4 ♖xf2+.

18...exd3 19 cxd3 ♖xd3 20 ♖c2 ♖a6 21 ♗d1 ♖b7 22 ♗e3



22...♖xe3! 0-1

If 23 fxc3 then 23...♖xe3+ and the queen hangs.

Game 2

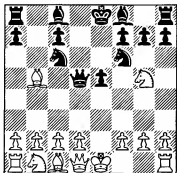
Grau Ribas-De Groot

Email 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♖c4 ♗f6 4 ♗g5 d5 5 exd5 b5! 6 ♖xb5?!

This move loses the two bishops which can be crucial in such a sharp position.

6...♖xd5

**7 ♗xc6+**

White also has:

a) 7 ♖e2 has been played a few times by weak players. Their games cannot really be seen as solid indicators for the way play should proceed, so I have tried to find my own path: 7...♗xg2 8 ♗xe5+ ♗e7 9 ♚f1 0-0 10 ♗g3 (10 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 and Black is much better) 10...♗d5!? (10...♗xg3 11 fxg3 ♔d4 12 ♗a4 ♗d7 and Black also has excellent play) 11 ♔c3 ♗c5 12 ♗xc7 ♔d4 13 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 14 ♗a4 h6 15 ♔ge4 ♔xe4 16 ♔xe4 ♗b6 with terrific compensation.

b) 7 ♗c2 ♗b7 8 d3 ♔d4 9 ♔f3! (best) 9...♔xe2 10 ♗xe2 ♗d6 11 ♔c3 ♗c6 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♗g5 ♔d7 with compensation, Mestrovic-Smejkal, Ybbs 1968.

c) 7 ♔c3 ♗xg2 8 ♗f3 ♗xf3 9 ♔xf3 ♗d7 10 0-0 (10 d3 ♗d6 with equality, or 10...♔d4 11 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 12 ♔xd4 exd4 13 ♔e2 ♗c5 and Black is probably a little better) 10...♗d6 (10...♔b4!? 11 ♔xe5 ♔xc2 12 ♔xd7 ♔xd7 13 ♗b1 0-0-0 with an unclear game ahead) 11 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 12 ♔xe5 ♗xe5 13 ♗e1 0-0-0 14 ♗xe5 ♗he8 15 d4 ♗xd4 16 ♗xe8+ ♔xe8 17 ♗e3 with an even endgame.

7...♗xc6 8 ♗f3?

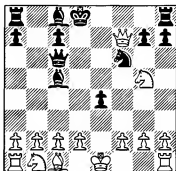
This move is simply a waste of time. There is no chance in hell that Black will exchange the queens, even though it is not bad at all. Instead, 8 0-0 can be seen in Game 3.

8...e4!

Black of course goes for the initiative. Nevertheless, possible was 8...♗xf3 9 ♔xf3 e4 10 ♔e5 ♗a6 11 b3 ♔d5 12 ♗a3 ♔b4 with some compensation for the pawn.

9 ♗b3 ♗c5!

Black does not want to waste his time protecting pawns. It is more important that his rook will come quickly to the f-file.

10 ♗xf7+ ♔d8**11 0-0**

White is in trouble. Alternatives were:

a) 11 ♔c3 ♗f8! 12 ♗xg7 ♗g8 13 ♗h6 ♗xf2+ 14 ♔f1 ♗a6+ 15 ♔e2 ♗d4 16 ♔e1 ♗xc2 17 ♔xe2 e3 and White has problems.

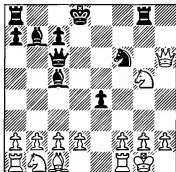
b) 11 ♗b3 ♗f8 12 0-0 ♔g4 13 d4 ♗xd4 14 ♗b4 (if 14 ♗d1 ♗d6! 15 ♔xe4 ♗xh2+ 16 ♔f1 ♗a6+ 17 c4 c5 and Black is much better, Essegern-Brauer, corr. 1981) 14...♗c5 15 ♗d1+ ♔e8 16 ♗xc4+ ♗xe4 17 ♔xe4 ♔xf2 18 ♔xf2 ♗xf2 19 ♗e1+ ♔f7 20 ♗c3 ♗xe3 21 ♗xc3 ♗xc2 and Black is better in the endgame; White must lose b2 or g2 now (22 b3 ♗b7 or 22 ♗b3? ♗c1+ 23 ♔f2 ♗f5).

11...h6?

This move gives away the h-pawn for no reason. It might seem that the game is not about pawns, which is true, but still they can have their function in the mating attack. Black had a win by force here: 11...♗f8! 12 ♗xg7 (for 12 ♗b3 ♔g4 see 11 ♗b3 above) 12...♗g8 13 ♗h6 ♗b7 14 ♔h1 ♗g6! (besides the tempo, we now see why the pawn should be on h7!) 15 ♗h4 ♗d5 16 ♔h3 (if 16 b4 e3!

17 f3 e2 18 ♖e1 ♗xg5 19 bxc5 ♖xf3! and Black wins, or 16 f4 e3 17 ♖h3 ♘e4 18 ♘f7+ ♘e8 19 ♘c3 ♘f2+ 20 ♗xf2 exf2) 16...e3 17 ♘f4 ♖xg2+ 18 ♘xg2 ♗xg2+ 19 ♘g1 ♗b7+ 20 ♖g3 exf2+ 21 ♗xf2 ♗xf2+ 22 ♘xf2 ♘e4+ and Black wins.

12 ♖xg7 ♗g8 13 ♖xh6 ♗b7



White is under a lot of pressure. This looks almost like a beginner's game, where White has been running around with his queen taking every pawn possible. Of course these strong analysts are not beginners, but sometimes you have a bad year in email chess, just as you can have a bad day in normal chess.

14 ♗h1

14 ♗d1? is met strongly by 14...♗xf2+ 15 ♗f1 e3 16 dxc3+ ♗e7 17 ♖h3 ♗xg5 and Black wins.

14...e3 15 f3 e2 16 ♗e1 ♘e4 17 ♘f7+!

White is taking some chances here. 17 fxe4?? was not possible due to 17...♖xh6 18 ♘f7+ ♘d7 19 ♘h6 ♗af8 and Black wins. But after 17 ♖xc6 ♘f2+ 18 ♘g1 ♘h3+ 19 ♗h1 Black is forced to take a draw because of ♘e6+. This was perhaps best.

17...♗c8 18 ♖xc6??

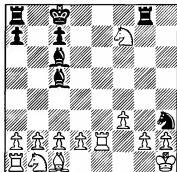
A terrible blunder – a very seldom guest in correspondence games. Instead, after 18 ♗xc2 ♘f2+ 19 ♗xf2 ♗xf2 20 ♖xc6 ♗xc6 21 ♘e5 ♗e8 22 ♘d3 ♗d4 Black has very good practical compensation for the material. White still needs to develop and his king is

vulnerable.

18...♘f2+ 19 ♘g1 ♘h3+ 20 ♗h1 ♗xc6!

Black is winning. There is no way that the white kingside can withstand this pressure.

21 ♗xe2



21...♗xf3!

A decisive though not terribly difficult combination.

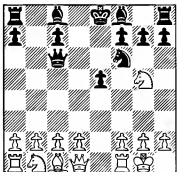
22 d4 ♗xe2 23 dxc5 ♗f3! 24 ♗g5 ♗b7 25 ♘d8 ♘xg5 26 ♘xb7 ♗xb7 27 ♘c3 ♗ae8 0-1

Game 3

Kan-Konstantinopolsky

Moscow 1945

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 d5 5 exd5 b5 6 ♗xb5?! ♖xd5 7 ♗xc6+ ♖xc6 8 0-0



Much better than 8 ♖f3.

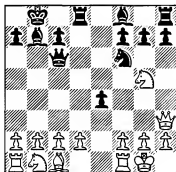
8...♟b7 9 ♖f3

Now this is forced. White cannot live with the pressure on the long diagonal. After 9 ♖f3? 0-0-0! Black has an excellent attack, e.g. 10 d3 e4 11 ♗e5 ♖d5 12 d4 e3 13 ♖f3 exf2+ 14 ♜xf2 ♟d6 and so on. Also possible is 9...♟d6? 10 d3 e4 11 ♖e1 0-0-0 12 ♖h4 h6 13 d4 ♖d7 14 f4 ♖d5 with an attack, Wolminkin-Krol, corr. 1961.

9 f3? is a stupid move. After 9...♟c5+ 10 ♖h1 h6 11 ♖h3 0-0-0 12 d3 g5 Black had a crushing attack in Best-Muir, corr. 1968-69.

9...e4 10 ♖b3 0-0-0 11 ♖h3+

White should not be greedy. After 11 ♖xf7? e3 12 f3 e2 13 ♖c1 ♟c5+ 14 ♖h1 ♜de8 15 d4 (or 15 ♖xb8 ♟f2) 15...♟xd4 16 ♖d3 ♟f2 17 ♖xe2 ♟a6! 18 ♖f5+ ♖b7 19 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 20 ♟d2 ♖c4 Black wins.

11...♖b8

Estrin was convinced that Black is better here, but perhaps it is not so clear.

12 ♖c3

12 ♖xf7? is still bad: after 12...♟d5! 13 ♖xh8 ♜h5 14 ♖c3 ♟c5 15 ♖h1 e3 16 f3 ♖g4! mate is coming – in a maximum of 7 moves according to Fritz 8.

12...♟d7 13 ♖e1 ♟b4?

The problem with this move is that the bishop on b4 is not threatening anything. Black should play for the attack! Therefore stronger was 13...♟c5! 14 ♖gxc4 ♖xc4 15 ♖xe4 (if 15 ♖xe4 ♖c7 16 d3 ♟b6 17 ♖c2 ♜he8 with compensation) 15...♖f6 16 ♖d1?

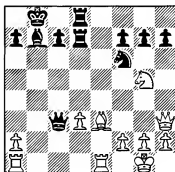
(necessary was 16 ♖e2 ♖c7 17 d4! ♖xc2 18 ♖xc2 ♟xd4 19 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 20 ♟e3 ♖xb2 21 ♖c1 ♟d8 22 ♖g4 with some kind of dynamic equality) 16...♟xe4 17 ♖xd7 ♟xc2 18 ♖b5+ ♟b6 19 ♖e3 ♟d8 20 a4 ♟d3 21 ♖b3 ♖a8 and Black was much better in Reiter-Repp, corr. 1986.

14 d3! exd3

14...♟xc3 15 bxc3 exd3 16 cxd3 ♖xc3 17 ♟c3 ♖xd3 18 ♖xf7 and with the safer king White stands better.

15 cxd3 ♜hd8 16 ♟e3 ♟xc3 17 bxc3 ♖xc3

If 17...♖xd3 18 ♖xf7 ♖e8 19 ♖ab1 and White is better.

**18 ♖ab1?**

This gives up the d-pawn needlessly. Better was 18 d4!, and although it closes the white bishop's diagonal, the knight gains a strong outpost after ♖g5-f3-e5. White can then proceed with the attack on the b-file and is much better. 18...♖a8 19 ♖f3 ♟xf3 20 ♖xf3+ ♟d5 does not seem to be a reliable defence for Black.

18...♖xd3 19 ♖f3 ♖d5 20 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 21 ♟d4

21 ♖e4 ♖xe3 22 ♖c5 ♟d1 23 ♖xb7+ ♖c8 24 ♖b1 ♖xe1+ 25 ♖xe1 ♖c2 and Black should win with an extra pawn in the ending.

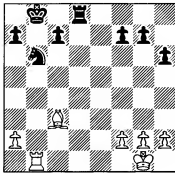
21...h6 22 ♖e4 ♖b6 23 ♟c3

Not 23 ♟xg7? ♟xe4 24 ♖xe4 f5 and Black wins.

23...♟xe4

Necessary, otherwise White will install a strong knight on c5.

24 ♙xe4 ♚d1+ 25 ♜e1 ♙xb1 26 ♙xb1



In this kind of position the chances are equal, which means 50% odds for Black winning, and 50% odds for a draw. But of course if you are Anatoly Karpov or Ulf Andersson, you will have a 99% chance of winning the game.

26...f6 27 h4 c5 28 ♖f1 ♖c7 29 ♜e2 ♜c6 30 g4!

The right plan. White wants to exchange all the pawns on the kingside. This follows the old rule that if you have a worse endgame, you should try to exchange pawns, and if you are better you should exchange pieces.

30...♚d7 31 g5?

But this is impatient. After 31 ♙c1 ♚d5 32 ♙d2 White retains his equal chances as before – that is a 25% chance if you want to be pessimistic.

31...hxg5 32 hxg5 ♚d5 33 ♙d2 fxg5

Now the position is more or less lost, though it is still not easy to win for Black.

34 ♙g1 ♙f4+ 35 ♚d1 ♚e6 36 ♖c1 ♚d5 37 ♜e1 ♜d6 38 ♜e3 ♙f5 39 ♚d3+ ♖c6 40 ♙e3 ♚d5

Better is 40...a5! 41 ♙a3 c4 and step by step Black wins.

41 ♙b3 ♚d8

Of course a move like this cannot be a mistake, but it proves that Black has no idea how he is going to win the position. One

thing you should know: as this game was played about 60 years ago, there were adjournments after 4 or 6 hours of play, and the games finished some hours or sometimes even days later. So perhaps Black was hoping to make his advantage last all the way to move 60, after which he could take it home and prepare a winning plan without the tension and pressure of the tournament hall.

42 ♙a3 ♚d7 43 ♙a4 ♙f7 44 ♜d1 ♚d4 45 ♙a6+

Not 45 ♙xd4? ♜b5 46 ♙a3 cxd4 and Black should win.

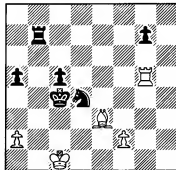
45...♜d5 46 ♙g6?

Better was 46 ♙xg5 ♙xf2 47 ♙xa7 ♙g2, although Black has excellent winning chances.

46...♖c4?

There was no need to give up the g5-pawn now. Better was 46...♚e6! and Black should win quickly.

47 ♙xg5 ♙b7 48 ♖c1 a5?



This gives White an unexpected chance. After 48...♜d3 49 ♚d5 a5 Black appears to be better prepared for the rook endgame – his main threat now is ♙b4 – but the following line shows this is not true: 50 ♙xd4 cxd4 51 ♙xa5 ♙f7 52 ♙g5 ♙xf2 53 ♙xg7 ♙f1+ 54 ♜b2 ♜e2 55 a4 d3 56 ♜e7+ ♜d1 57 a5 ♙f6 58 ♜c3 d2 59 ♙d7 ♜c1 60 ♜c4 d1 ♙ 61 ♙xd1+ ♜xd1 62 ♜b5 ♜d2 63 a6 and the endgame is drawn. The correct move was 48...♙d7! maintaining a clear advantage.

49 ♖xd4!

White correctly evaluates the rook ending as a draw.

49...♗xd4

49...cxd4 50 ♖xa5 ♖f7 is met strongly by 51 ♖g5 ♖xf2 52 ♖xg7 ♗c3 (if 52...♖xa2 53 ♖g3! and White makes a draw with the Philidor position; i.e. after 53...d3 54 ♖g8 the black king can no longer hide from the checks) 53 ♖c7+ ♗d3 54 a4 and White should draw.

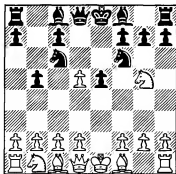
50 ♗c2 ♖f7 51 ♖g4+ ♗d5 52 ♖g5+ ♗c6 53 ♗b3 ♖f3+ 54 ♗c4 ♖f4+ 55 ♗b3 a4+ 56 ♗a3 ♗b5 57 ♖xg7 ♖f3+ 58 ♗b2 a3+ 59 ♗b1 ♖xf2 60 ♖b7+ ♗c4 61 ♖b8 ♖h2

Black can win the a-pawn by 61...♖f1+ and 62...♖a1, but this endgame is a book draw.

62 ♖b7 ♖g2 ½-½

Game 4
Howell-Volzhin
Calcutta 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♖c4 ♗f6 4 ♗g5 d5 5 exd5 b5 6 ♖f1!

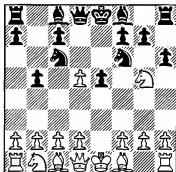


This paradoxical move is the strongest here. One point is that it protects g2 so that 6...♖xd5? can be answered by 7 ♗c3. Another is that the bishop is not attacked, as after 6 ♖c2 ♗d4.

6...h6?!

This variation is now considered dubious. The usual continuation 6...♗d4 7 c3 transposes to 5...♗d4 6 c3 b5 7 ♖f1 covered in Chapter 2.

Another alternative is 6...♗xd5 7 ♖xb5 ♖b7 (7...♖d7?! is met strongly with 8 ♖h5! g6 9 ♖f3 ♖xg5 10 ♖xd5 ♖f6 11 ♗c3 and Black is a pawn down without compensation) 8 d4! exd4 9 0-0 ♖c7 (if 9...♖f6?! 10 ♖e1+! ♗de7 11 ♖f3 and White is clearly better; less clear is 10 ♖f3 ♗de7 11 ♖xf6?! gx6 12 ♗c4 0-0-0 13 ♗xf6 ♖d6 14 ♗e4 ♖g6 when Black has compensation according to Obukhov) 10 ♖h5 g6 11 ♖h6 ♖d6 12 ♖g7 ♖f6 13 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 14 ♖e1+ (this is not a good moment for reaping; after 14 ♗e4 ♖c7 15 ♖d1! 0-0 16 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 17 ♖xd4 ♖ad8 Black has great compensation for the pawn) 14...♗f8 15 ♗e4 and White is slightly better.

**7 ♗xf7!**

This move is the refutation. The alternatives are less critical:

a) 7 ♗e6?! only *looks* dangerous: 7...fxe6 8 dxc6 ♖c5 9 d4 (if 9 ♖d3?! 0-0 10 0-0 ♖d4 with a great attack) 9...♖xd4 10 ♖d3 0-0 11 0-0 ♖d5 12 ♖c2 a6 13 c3 ♖b6 and Black was slightly better in Morozvich-Piket, London (rapid) 1995.

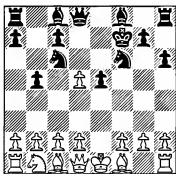
b) 7 ♖xb5? ♖xd5 8 ♗c3 ♖xg2 9 ♖f3 ♖xf3 10 ♗xf3 ♖d7 and Black is slightly better.

c) 7 dxc6 hxg5 8 ♖c2 (if 8 d4 ♗g4! 9 h3

exd4 10 ♖xb5 ♜d5 11 ♜e2+ ♖c6 12 ♖d3 ♜f6 with good compensation for the pawn) 8...♖d6 9 d4 (or 9 ♜xb5 a5 10 ♜a4 e4 with compensation) 9...♖h4 10 f4 ♖g4 11 ♜xb5 exf4 and Black had the initiative in Alberny-Schaller, corr. 1992.

d) 7 ♜f3 (natural) 7...♜xd5 8 ♜c3 ♜e6 and now if 9 ♖xb5?! ♖b7 10 ♜e2 0-0-0 with very good compensation, e.g. 11 ♖xc6 ♜xc6 12 d3 e4 13 dxe4 ♖a6 14 ♜e3 ♖c5 15 ♜e5 ♜d6 16 ♜xf7 ♜b6 17 ♜f3 ♜d7 18 ♜xb8 ♜g4 with a strong attack in Strange-Aagaard, Aalborg 1994; while after 9 ♜xb5 ♜e7 10 d4 e4 11 ♜e5 ♜xe5 12 dxe5 ♜xe5 13 ♖e3 ♖c5 14 ♖d4 ♖xd4 15 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 16 ♜xd4 0-0 and the game was equal in Bronstein-G.Flear, Hastings 1994/95.

7...♜xf7



7...♜xd5 8 ♜xb8 ♖g4 9 f3 ♖h5 10 ♜c3 ♜e6 11 ♖xb5 0-0-0 would be the 19th century way to play this line for Black. It is probably just as unsound as most 19th century games, but for a blitz game... why not?

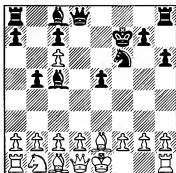
8 dxc6 ♖c5

If 8...♜d5 9 ♜f3 ♜c5 10 ♜b3+ ♖e6 11 ♜xb5 ♜g4 12 ♜xc5 ♖xc5 13 ♖a6 ♖xf2+ 14 ♖e2 and White is much better according to Pálkövi.

9 ♖e2!

The best move. After 9 ♖xb5?! ♜g4 10 0-0 ♜h4 White is under heavy attack; e.g. 11 ♜f3+ (not 11 h3? ♖xf2+ 12 ♖h1 ♖e8 13 ♜f3 ♖f8 14 ♜a3 ♖f6! 15 ♖e2 ♖d4 16 ♖xf6

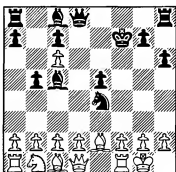
♜xf6 17 ♜f3 ♖g4 18 ♜f1 ♜h5 and Black wins – Pálkövi) 11...♖e8 12 ♜g3 ♜xg3 13 hxg3 ♖f8 14 ♖e2 ♜xf2 15 b4 ♖b6 16 ♖h2 ♜g4+ 17 ♖h1 ♜f2+ with a draw.



9...♖e4

After 9...♖xf2+ 10 ♖xf2 ♜e4+ 11 ♖f1 ♖f8 12 d3 ♖g8+ 13 ♖f3 ♖g4 14 ♜e2 and White wins – Howell.

10 0-0



10...♖xf2+?

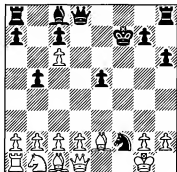
Black is in a difficult situation here. The alternatives are:

a) 10...♜h4?! 11 ♜e1 ♖f8 12 d3 ♜xf2?! (better 12...♜d6 but Black's compensation is gone) 13 ♖xf2+ ♖g8 14 ♖f3 and White wins.

b) 10...♖f8! 11 d4 ♖xd4 12 ♜d2 ♜xd2 13 ♖xd2 ♖xb2 14 ♖b1 ♖d4 15 ♖xb5 and White is much better here.

c) 10...♜f6!? is the best try and is consid-

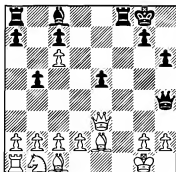
ered in Game 5.
11 ♖xf2+ ♜xf2



12 ♖f1!

Black had probably counted on 12 ♖xf2? ♖d4+ 13 ♖f1 ♖f8 14 c3 ♖g8+ 15 ♖f3 ♖h4 16 ♖g1 (16 d3 ♖xh2 17 ♜d2 ♖e6 18 ♖e2 might give White an advantage, but Black is allowed too much counterplay all the same) 16...e4 17 g3 ♖f6 18 ♖g2 ♖g4 19 ♖e1 ♖f3 and Black has good compensation.

12...♖f8 13 ♖xf2+ ♖g8 14 ♖e3 ♖h4



15 g3

More accurate was 15 ♖xb5! ♖h3 (if 15...♖b8 16 ♖d3 ♖b4 17 c4 ♖f5 18 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 19 d3 and wins) 16 g3 ♖f5 17 d3 ♖af8 18 ♜d2 ♖h5 19 ♖e1 ♖xh3 20 ♖c4+ ♖h8 21 ♖d5 ♖f2 22 ♖xf2 ♖xf2 23 ♖xf2 ♖xh2+ 24 ♖g2 ♖h4+ 25 ♖e2 and White wins – Howell.

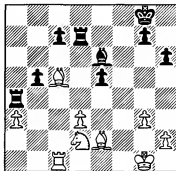
15...♖f6 16 d3 ♖h3 17 ♜d2 ♖f7 18 b3

♖xc6

If 18...a5 19 ♖b2 and White is much better.

19 ♜e4 ♖xc2 20 ♖a3 a5 21 ♖c5 ♖e6

After 21...♖b2 22 ♖e1 ♖f5 (not 22...♖xa2? 23 g4! ♖xg4 24 ♖xg4 ♖xb3 25 ♖h3 and wins) 23 ♖h5 g6 24 ♖d1 ♖d8 25 ♜f2! White has a virtually winning position.
22 ♖d2 ♖xd2 23 ♜xd2 a4 24 bxa4 ♖xa4 25 a3 ♖d7 26 ♖c1



White is winning as the black pawns are very weak. For example, if we moved the black pawns from e5 to f6 and b5 to b7, the position would be slightly better for Black!
26...♖g4 27 ♖f1!

No exchanges, as they would only grant the black rooks more freedom on the board.
27...♖f5 28 ♖c3 c6 29 ♖b4 ♖a6 30 ♖f2 ♖e6 31 ♖e3 ♖d5 32 ♜f3 ♖f7 33 ♖e2 ♖xf3 34 ♖xf3 ♖f6 35 ♖c5 1-0

Black has no counterplay. He decided to call it a day.

Game 5

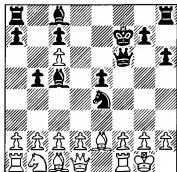
Leisebein-Grott

Correspondence 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♖c4 ♜f6 4 ♜g5 d5 5 exd5 b5 6 ♖f1! h6?! 7 ♜xf7! ♖xf7 8 dxc6 ♖c5 9 ♖e2! ♜e4 10 0-0 ♖f6!?

If Black has enough compensation after this move then the variations with 6...h6 have a right to live. But as I see it, the compensa-

tion is only of a practical nature, and with accurate play White should keep the advantage.



11 ♖h5+?

This fares badly. 11 ♖e1 ♘g5 12 ♘c3 ♚b8 13 d3 ♖d4 with some practical chances, but nothing more.

11...g6 12 ♖f3

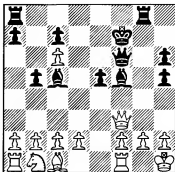
After 12 ♖f3 ♘xf2 13 ♖e2 e4! Black has a strong initiative; e.g. 14 ♖xb5?! ♖d4 15 ♖e2 ♘e8 and Black wins because of the threat of ...♘h3+ and smothered mate, or if 16 h3 ♚f8 17 ♘h2 ♖d6+ 18 g3 ♖xg3+ 19 ♘xg3 ♖d6+ and White is mated.

12...gxh5 13 ♖xe4 ♚g8 14 ♘h1

Or 14 d3 ♖h3 15 g3 ♚ad8 with a powerful attack.

14...♖f5 15 ♖f3

If 15 ♖d5+ ♖c6 16 ♖xc5 ♚xg2! 17 f4 ♚ag8 and White has no defence against 18...♚xh2+ and 19...♖h4 mate.



15...♚xg2!

Black shows no restraint.

16 ♘xg2?!

On 16 ♖xg2 ♚g8 17 ♖f3 ♚g4! 18 ♘c3 ♖e4 19 ♖xe4 ♚xe4 20 ♘xe4 ♖f3+ 21 ♖g1 ♖xe4 wins because of the threat of ...♖f3 followed by ...h4-h3. In such a position the pawn can become an attacking piece. Or if 17 ♖d5+ ♖e6 18 ♖e4 ♖h3 (18...♚g4 19 f4 ♖g7 20 d4 ♖xd4 21 ♖e3 ♖xe3 22 ♘c3 is not so clear) 19 d4 ♖xd4 20 ♖d5+ ♖e6 21 ♖e4 ♚g4 22 f4 ♚h4 23 ♖e3 ♖xe3 24 f5 ♖c4 25 ♖xe3 ♖xf1 and Black is much better.

16...♚g8+ 17 ♘h1 e4 18 ♖c3 ♖g4 19 ♖xf6+ ♘xf6 0-1

There is no defence against the mate.

Summary

Against 5...b5!? White's only chance to fight for the advantage is with 6 ♖f1, after which Black should probably transpose to Chapter 2 with 6...♘d4. The alternatives 6...♘xd5 and 6...h6 both seem dubious and should be played at your own risk – without blaming the author of this book for the consequences, unless you are victorious of course!

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 ♗g5 d5 5 exd5 b5 (D) 6 ♖f1

6 dxc6 bxc4 7 ♘c3 – Game 1

6 ♖xb5 ♗xd5 7 ♖xc6+ ♗xc6 (D)

8 ♗f3 – Game 2

8 0-0 – Game 3

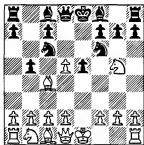
6...h6

6...♘d4 7 c3 – 5...♘d4 (Chapter 2)

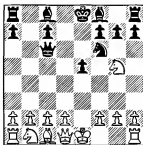
7 ♗xf7 ♗xf7 8 dxc6 ♖c5 9 ♖e2 ♖e4 10 0-0 (D)

10...♖xf2+ – Game 4

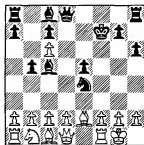
10...♗f6 – Game 5



5...b5



7...♗xc6



10 0-0

CHAPTER TWO

Fritz Variation:

4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♘d4



1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♘d4

5...♘d4 is called the Fritz Variation, named after Aleksander Fritz (1857–1932), who was a German Master. He was a player who never recorded great successes, but who could still beat anyone on a good day. His sword drew the blood of Steinitz, Paulsen and Mason among others. He wrote an article about 5...♘d4 in a 1904 issue of the *Deutsche Schachzeitung*, and three years later he wrote another article about 5...♘d4 in the Swedish journal *Tidskrift för Schack*.

The standard position comes after 6 c3 b5 7 ♗f1!, which can also arise by the move order 5...b5 6 ♗f1! ♘d4 7 c3. The main move now is 7...♘xd5, but we are getting ahead of ourselves.

Game 6 G.Lee-luldachev Gent 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♘f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♘d4

Besides 5...♘a5, this is the most serious move.

6 c3

Other moves are worse:

a) 6 0-0? b5 7 ♗b3 h6 8 ♘f3 ♗g4 9 ♖e1

♘xf3+ 10 gxf3 ♗xf3 11 ♖xe5+ ♗e7 12 ♘c3 ♖d7! (or 12...0-0 with compensation) 13 ♗e1 (not 13 ♖g3? ♖f5! and there is no defence to ...♘h5) 13...♘h5 14 ♖xc7+ ♖xc7 15 ♗xe7+ ♖xc7 16 ♘xb5 ♘f4 and Black is much better.

b) 6 d6? ♖xd6 7 ♗xf7+ ♗e7 8 ♗b3 (if 8 c3 h6 9 cxd4 hxg5 10 ♗b3 exd4) 8...♘xb3 9 axb3 h6 10 ♘f3 e4 11 ♘g1 ♗f7 12 ♘c3 ♖c6 and Black was much better in Bogolubow-Rubinstein, Stockholm 1919.

c) 6 ♘c3?! h6 7 ♘f3 ♗g4 8 ♗e2 (8 d3 ♗b4 9 0-0 0-0 10 a4! [10 ♗e1 b5 11 ♗b3 ♗e8 12 ♗d2 a5 13 a4 ♗xf3 14 gxf3 ♘xb3 15 cxb3 bxa4 16 bxa4 ♘xd5 and Black is much better] 10...♖d6 and Black is slightly better) 8...♗xf3 9 ♗xf3 ♗b4 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♗e1 ♗e8 12 a3 ♗xc3 13 dxc3 ♘xf3+ 14 ♖xf3 ♖xd5 and Black is slightly better according to Gli-goric.

6...b5

Other moves are just weak, e.g. 6...♘f5? 7 ♖c2!? ♘xd5 8 ♖xe5+ ♘f7 9 ♘e4 f6 10 ♖g3 ♘f5 11 ♖f3 and White is a pawn up with a better position.

7 ♗f1!

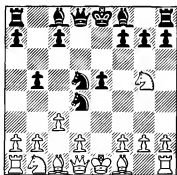
Not 7 ♗d3?! ♗f5! 8 ♗xf5 ♘xf5 9 ♖f3 ♖d7 and Black is slightly better according to ECO. White has also tried 7 cxd4 bxc4 and:

a) 8 ♖a4+ ♖d7! (8...♘d7 9 ♘f3 exd4 is

less strong because of 10 0-0! – a new idea; after 10 dxd4 e5 Black is better – 10... e7
 11 dxd4 0-0 12 c6 b6 13 dxd8 dxa4
 14 c6 e6 15 c3 b6 16 a4 d7 17 a5
 dxd5 18 dxd5 xc6 19 dxf6+ gxf6 with
 equality) 9 xc4 (probably better is 9 xd7+
 xd7 10 dxe5 dxd5 although Black has
 compensation for the pawn) 9... xd5 10
 xd5 dxd5 11 c3 b4 12 0-0 c2 13
 d5 (if 13 b1 dxd4) 13... b8! 14 b1 c6
 and Black is much better.

b) 8 dxe5 xd5 (attention should also be
 paid to 8... dxd5! ? 9 f3 wg5 10 xd5
 b8 11 0-0 b7 12 wb5+ cd8 13 f3 a6 14
 xc4 xc5 with compensation in Avtono-
 mov-Estrin, Moscow 1948, while if 9 a4+
 d7 10 xc4 a5! 11 c3 b4 and Black
 has excellent attacking chances according to
 Estrin) 9 xf6 (after 9 0-0 b7 10 f3 xf3
 11 dxf3 d7 and Black is at least equal, or if
 9 d3 d7 10 0-0 b7 11 c3 c6 12 e1
 0-0-0 with full compensation) 9... wg5 10
 f3 b8 11 e3+ (or 11 0-0 xf6 12 xf6
 gxf6 with a fine position) 11... xc3+ 12 dxe3
 gxf6 and here the two bishops and the half
 open g- and b-files give Black sufficient
 compensation for the bad pawn structure.

7... dxd5



7... h6? is no good; after 8 cxd4 hxg5 9
 dxc5 dxd5 10 xb5+ d7 11 xd7+ xd7
 12 c3 d4 13 d4 dxc2+ 14 c1 wh3 15
 wa4+ cd8 16 c6 d4+ 17 e1 df3+ 18
 cd1 c8 19 e3 White is much better ac-

ording to Estrin.

8 cxd4!?

Also possible are 8 h4 and 8 e4 , as can
 be seen later in this chapter. With 8 cxd4
 White takes the money and runs!

8 dxf7?! does not really work: 8... xf7 9
 cxd4 exd4 10 wf3+ (if 10 xb5 c7+ 11
 we2 xe2+ 12 xe2 b4 13 c4+ cg6 14
 0-0 f5 15 a3 d3 16 xd3+ dxd3 17
 c4 e8 with excellent compensation for
 the pawn) 10... f6! and now:

a) 11 xa8? c5 12 c6 (if 12 xb5
 e8+ 13 c1 a6 14 c6 e7 15 xe8+
 xe8 16 xa6 a4 17 c2 d3 18 h5+
 dxb5 19 c3 wh4 and Black wins)
 12... c7+ 13 cd1 d7 14 wb7 c6! 15 wa6
 d4 16 c4+ bxc4 17 c1 c4! 18 xc4+
 e6 19 a6 (or 19 c2 wg2 20 f3 xe2+
 21 xe2 c4+ 22 d3 e8+ 23 cd2 e3 24
 e1 b4+ 25 c3 a6) 19... wg2 20 b4
 e5 21 a3 d3 and Black wins.

b) 11 xb5 c6 and then:

b1) 12 b3 d5 (not 12... b8 13 e2 d6
 14 0-0 hxh2+? – Estrin was convinced that
 this sacrifice wins, but... 15 hxh2 d4+ 16
 g1! wh4 17 f3+ cg8 18 wh3 and White
 wins) 13 c4 xc4 14 bxc4 we8+ 15 c1
 (weaker is 15 e2! d3 16 xc8+ xe8+ 17
 c1 b4! and Black is much better)
 15... c6 with more than adequate compen-
 sation, e.g. 16 xa8? xc4+ 17 e1 xc1+
 and Black wins.

b2) 12 0-0 b8 13 a4 d5 (13... d5! ?
 also gives enough counterplay) 14 e2 c5
 15 d3 f8 (or 15...c6 16 d2 e8 with com-
 pensation – Pálkövi) 16 d2 g8 17 b3
 h8 18 xd5 xd5 19 f3 be8 20 d1
 d6 21 wb3 wh5 and Black's initiative was
 more than sufficient compensation for the
 pawn in V.Ivanov-Kobalia, Moscow 1996.

8... wg5 9 xb5+

This is the most logical move, although
 others have also been on the scanner:

a) 9 wb3? exd4 10 xb5+ d7 11
 xd7+ xd7 12 0-0 d6 gives Black excel-
 lent attacking chances.

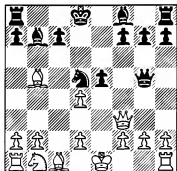
b) 9 ♖e2 ♜b4 (also interesting is 9...a6!? 10 ♜c3 ♜f4 11 ♖xc5+ ♖xc5+ 12 dxe5 ♙b7 13 d4 ♜xg2+ 14 ♙xg2 ♙xg2 15 ♚g1 ♙b7 with even chances, or if 11 ♖e4 ♚b8 12 d3 ♙b7 13 ♙xf4 ♖xf4 14 ♖xc5+ ♖xc5+ 15 dxe5 ♙c5 Black has compensation on the dark squares) 10 ♜a3 ♙d6 11 dxe5 0-0 12 d4 ♖h4 13 ♙e3 c5 14 ♜xb5 cxd4 15 ♙xd4 ♙a6 16 g3 ♙xb5 17 gxf4 ♙xc2 18 ♖xe2 ♚fe8 19 f4 f6 and the game was unclear in Norris-Nishimura, Jakarta 1993.

c) 9 ♜c3 exd4 10 ♙xb5+ ♙d7 11 ♙xd7+ ♖xd7 12 0-0 ♜f4 13 ♖a4+ ♖c8 14 ♖c8+ ♖b7 15 ♖e4+ c6 16 d3 ♖xg2+ 17 ♖xg2 ♜xg2 18 ♖xg2 dxc3 19 bxc3 gives an equal position. This is a typical ending for this line, as we shall see in the main game.

9...♖d8 10 ♖f3

Or 10 0-0 ♙b7 11 ♖f3.

10...♙b7



11 0-0

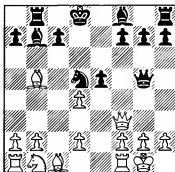
Not 11 ♖xf7? ♜f6! 12 ♖c4 ♖xg2 13 ♚f1 a6 14 ♙a4 ♖e4+ 15 ♖e2 exd4 and Black is better.

11 ♜c3 exd4 12 0-0!? ♚b8 transposes to the game, but note that 12...dxc3 is risky after 13 dxc3 ♖f6 14 ♖g4 ♙e6 (not 14...♖d6? 15 ♚d1 c6 16 ♙a4 ♖c7 17 c4 ♜f6 18 ♖g5 ♖e7 19 ♙f4+ ♖c8 20 ♖a5 and White wins) 15 ♙g5+ ♙e7 16 ♙xc7+ ♖xc7 17 ♚fe1 when White has a very strong attack for the piece.

11...♚b8

Not 11...e4? 12 ♖xc4 ♙d6 13 ♚e1 and

Black does not have enough compensation for the pawns.



12 ♜c3?!

Black is also slightly better after 12 ♖g3?! ♖xg3 13 hxg3 exd4 or 12 d3?! ♖g6 13 ♖g3 exd4 14 ♚e1 ♙d6 15 ♖xg6 hxg6. White should play 12 dxe5, as can be seen in Game 7.

12...exd4

Black could also try either 12...♜xc3 13 dxc3 ♙xf3 14 ♙xg5+ f6 15 gxf3 ♚xb5 16 ♙c1 exd4 17 ♚d1 with equality, or 12...♜e3!? 13 ♖h3 ♖xg2+ 14 ♖xg2 ♜xg2 15 dxe5 ♜h4 (better than 15...♜f4?! 16 ♚e1 ♜h3+ 17 ♖f1 as 17...♙c5?! fails to 18 d4! ♙xd4 19 ♙e3 ♙xc3 20 ♚ad1+ ♖e7 21 ♚xc3 and White is much better) 16 ♙e2 ♜f3+ 17 ♙xf3 ♙xf3 18 d4 ♚b6 with good compensation for the pawn. Black's big dream here is to win the h-pawn and race his own to h1.

13 d3

13 ♚e1? is best met by 13...♙d6! when Black is just better. The alternative 13...♜e7 14 ♖h3 c6 seems to favour Black, but then White is forced into 15 ♜e4 ♖xb5 16 ♖g3 ♚c8 17 ♜d6 ♜f5 18 ♜xf7+ ♖d7 19 ♖g4 with a strong attack despite the bishop deficit.

13...♜e3

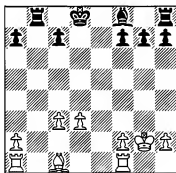
Here I think I have an improvement with 13...♜e7! which has not been considered before. After 14 ♙xg5 (if 14 ♖xb7?! ♚xb7 15 ♙xg5 dxc3 16 ♙a6 ♚xb2 17 ♚fe1 f6 18

♠e3 ♘d5 and Black is better, or 14 ♖h3 ♗f5 15 ♗xf5 ♘xf5 16 ♘e4 ♙xc4 17 dxe4 ♚xb5 18 exf5 ♚xf5 and Black is a pawn up) 14...♙xf3 15 ♙c4 dxc3 16 gx3 cxb2 17 ♚ab1 f6 18 ♙c1 ♘c6 19 ♙xb2 ♙d6 it appears that Black is slightly better. Also playable is 13...♗e5 14 ♘e4 ♘f6 15 ♙c4 ♙d6 16 ♘xd6 ♗xd6 17 ♗g3 with equality.

14 ♙c6

Now comes a long forced line.

14...♗xg2+ 15 ♗xg2 ♘xg2 16 ♙xg2 ♙xg2 17 ♗xg2 dxc3 18 bxc3



As noted earlier, this is a typical ending for this line and chances are about equal. However, White needs to show more caution because of the weakness of his kingside.

18...♙d6 19 ♙e3 a6 20 ♚ab1 ♘d7 21 ♙a7?

It looks innocent, but actually this is the decisive mistake! Now White cannot avoid ♚xb5 axb5, after which he has a lost endgame due to the weakness of his a- and h-pawns. 21 a4 with an even endgame was clearly better. Then White could start thinking about 22 ♙a7.

21...♚b5!

Black does not give up the open file.

22 ♚xb5

White has no good options here. If 22 c4 ♚g5+ 23 ♘f3 ♙xh2 and Black is clear pawn up, or 22 ♙c3 ♚hb8 23 ♚xb5 axb5 and Black is much better.

22...axb5 23 ♙d4 ♚a8 24 ♚b1 c5 25

♙e3 ♗c6

This ending is lost for White.

26 ♚b2 ♚a3 27 ♚c2 f5 28 h3 ♙e7 29 ♙c1 ♚a8 30 c4 b4 31 ♘f3 ♙f6 32 ♙f4 ♚d8 33 ♙e2 g5 34 ♙g3 g4 35 hxg4?!

Losing by force. White would have more chance of survival after 35 h4, though the passive position of the white pieces and the weakness of the h-pawn (after 35...h5) should be enough to secure victory for Black.

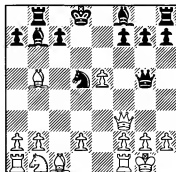
35...fxg4 36 ♚c1 ♚a8 37 ♚c2 ♚a3 38 ♙f4 h5 39 ♙c1 ♚a8 40 ♙f4 ♚f8 41 ♙e3 h4 42 ♚d2 ♙c3 43 ♚c2 h3 44 ♘f1 ♚d8 45 ♚c1 ♙xd3 46 ♙e2 ♚d7 47 ♚g1 h2 48 ♚h1 ♙e5 49 f4 gx3+ 50 ♘f3 ♚a7 51 ♙e4 ♙d6 0-1

Game 7

Sermek-Olarasu

Nova Gorica 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 d5 5 exd5 ♘d4 6 c3 b5 7 ♙f1 ♘xd5 8 cxd4 ♗xg5 9 ♙xb5+ ♘d8 10 ♗f3 ♙b7 11 0-0 ♚b8 12 dxe5!



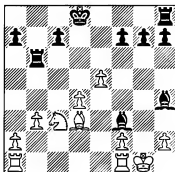
This is the critical position for 8 cxd4. Black has a wide range of discovered attacks.

12...♘b4?!

This is not the best. Also weak is 12...♘f4?! 13 ♗g3 ♗xe5 14 d4 ♘h3+ 15 ♗xh3 ♗xb5 16 ♘c3 ♗b6 17 ♙f4 and White is much better.

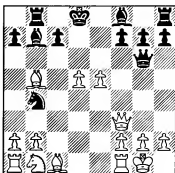
Black should play 12...♘e3! 13 ♗h3

♙xg2+ 14 ♙xg2 ♜xg2 15 d4 ♜h4 (not 15...♙e7?! 16 ♙e2 ♜h4 17 f4 when Black has no compensation for the pawn; e.g. 17...♜f5 18 ♜c3 ♜xd4 19 ♜d1 c5 20 ♙e3 ♜e8 21 ♙xd4 cxd4 22 ♜b5 g5 23 f5 f6 24 ♜xd4 ♙e5 25 ♜ac1 ♙b6 26 e6 and White is much better) 16 ♙g5+ ♙e7 17 ♙hx4 (after 17 ♙xe7+? ♜xe7 and Black is already better) 17...♙hx4 18 ♜c3. So far Wiech-Jedynak, Warsaw 1994, and now Black should have continued 18...♙f3! 19 b3 (19 ♙e2 ♙xe2 20 ♜xe2 ♜xb2 21 ♜ab1 ♙b6 is fine for Black) 19...♙b6 20 ♙d3



20...♙g6+!! (not 20...♙e7?! 21 ♜ac1 ♜d8 22 ♜b5 ♙b7 23 ♜c4 and White is much better) 21 ♙xg6 hxg6 22 ♜fe1 ♙g5 23 e6 f5 24 e7+ (or 24 ♜e2 ♙d2 25 ♜ed1 ♙g5 26 ♜g3 ♙xd1 27 ♙xd1 ♜e7 28 d5 ♜d8 29 ♜e2 ♙f6 30 ♜f4 g5 31 ♜g6+ ♜d6 and Black should draw) 24...♜e8 25 ♜e6 ♙f4 26 ♙xg6 ♜hx2 27 ♜f1 ♜xe7 28 ♜e2 ♙h6 29 ♙g3 (if 29 ♜g3? ♜f7 30 ♙a6 f4 31 ♜e2 ♙g4! and White has problems) 29...♙e4 and Black has compensation here; for example 30 f4 (if 30 f3 ♙d3 31 f4 ♙h1+ 32 ♙g1 ♙h2 33 ♜c1 ♙xf4 34 ♙xg7+ ♜f6 and White will have to fight for survival) 30...♙h1+ 31 ♙g1 ♙h2 32 ♜e1 ♜f6 and the bishop on e4 is worth more than the white rook. Tarrasch talked about two bishops equalling rook and knight. Here the question is whether or not the rook and knight equal the two bishops.

13 d4 ♙g6 14 d5!



White gives up this pawn in order to open the d-file towards the black king. Black is in trouble here. If instead 14 ♙g3? ♙xg3 15 fxg3 ♜c2 16 ♙g5+ ♙e7 17 ♙xe7+ ♜xe7 18 ♜c3 ♜xa1 19 ♜xa1 f6 20 exf6+ ♜xf6 21 ♜f1+ ♜e7 22 ♜e1+ ♜d6 and with the d4-pawn as a weakness it is White who will fight for a draw.

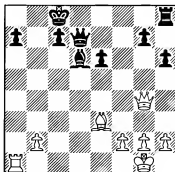
14...♙xd5 15 ♜d1 ♙xb5 16 ♜c3 ♙c6 17 ♙f5!?

White decides to keep up the pressure. White is also better after the simple 17 ♜xb5 ♙xb5 18 ♙xf7 ♜c8 19 ♙f5+ ♜b7 20 a3.

17...h6 18 a3 ♙a5 19 ♙b1 ♙e6 20 ♙h5 ♜c8 21 axb4 ♙xb4 22 ♜xd5 ♙xd5 23 ♙xd5 ♙xd5 24 ♙g4+ ♙d7 25 e6!

Again White sacrifices a pawn for a strong attack on the enemy king. After 25 ♙xd7+? ♜xd7 26 ♙e3 the position is just equal.

25...fxe6 26 ♙e3 ♙d6 27 ♙a1



Black's position is more or less lost.

27...e5

If 27...c5 28 b4 and the attack should crash through.

28 ♖e4 ♘d8 29 ♜xa7 ♔e7?

Necessary was 29...♞f8 and maybe Black can still fight.

30 ♖g6 ♜g8 31 ♙xh6 ♖e6 32 ♙g5+ ♘d7 33 ♖e4 ♖b3 34 g3!

This is worth remembering: when your position is completely winning, please do not allow your opponent to mate you!

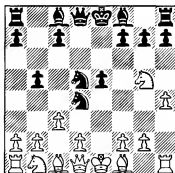
34...♞d1+ 35 ♔g2 ♞f8 36 ♙e3 ♔e7 37 ♙c5 ♘d7 38 ♙xd6 ♖xd6 39 ♖g4+ ♔e7 40 ♖xg7+ ♞f7 41 ♖g5+ ♘d7 42 ♖g4+ ♔e7 43 ♖e4 1-0

Game 8

Chandler-P. Littlewood

London 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 d5 5 exd5 b5 6 ♙f1 ♘d4 7 c3 ♘xd5 8 h4!



White protects the knight, which is not such an unnatural idea.

8...h6

Black needs to be persistent. After 8...♘f5? 9 ♙xb5+ ♙d7 10 ♙c4 White is much better.

9 ♔e4

Dubious is 9 ♘xf7 ♘xf7 10 cxd4 exd4 11 ♖f3+ ♘f6 12 ♖xa8 as long as Black contin-

ues actively. All authors are convinced that 12...♙d6 13 ♙xb5 ♞e8+ 14 ♘f1 ♙a6 15 ♖c6 ♖e7 wins for Black; but after the simple 16 g3! we see how cruel life is: White wins.

Much stronger is 12...♙c5! 13 ♙xb5 (if 13 d3 ♖e7+ 14 ♘d2 ♙b4+ 15 ♘c3 ♖c5 and Black is winning, Michalczak-Hermann, Cuxhaven 1994) 13...♖e7+ 14 ♘f1 ♙a6 15 ♖c6 ♞e8 when 16 g3 is answered by 16...d3! 17 ♖f3 ♖e2+ 18 ♖xe2 dxe2+ 19 ♘g2 ♙xb5 and Black has a very strong attack for the exchange. It is not clear that White can hold, e.g. 20 ♞e1 g5 21 ♘c3 ♙c6+ 22 ♘g1 gxf4 23 ♞xe2 ♞xe2 24 ♘xe2 ♙xf2+! 25 ♘h2 ♙f3 26 gxf4 ♙xe2 and Black wins.

9...♘e6

Compared with 8 ♘e4, Black obviously cannot consider 9...♖h4 here.

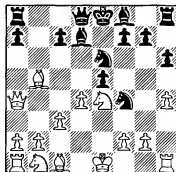
10 ♙xb5+ ♙d7 11 ♖a4

11 ♙xd7+? ♖xd7 12 0-0 ♙e7 gives Black an easy game; for example 13 h5 f5 and Black is better.

11...♘d4

Black needs to play actively. After 11...♙e7 12 ♙xd7+ ♖xd7 13 ♖xd7+ ♘xd7 14 f3 ♘d4 15 g3 ♘d3+ 16 ♖e2 ♘xc1+ 17 ♞xc1 ♞hb8!? there is insufficient compensation for the pawn.

12 d4



12...f5?

Here Black is too optimistic. Attacks are usually better performed with pieces than pawns. Especially if the pieces are on the

back rank!

Better was 12...♖xg2+ 13 ♖f1 ♖gf4 14 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 15 dxe5 ♖d3 16 ♖b2P (or 16 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 17 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 18 ♖e2 ♖xe5 and the position is equal – Pálkövi) 16...♖xe5 17 ♖e1 ♖e7 18 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 19 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 with equality.

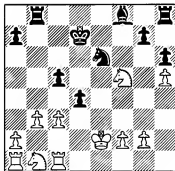
12...exd4?! is less convincing: 13 ♖xf4 ♖xf4 14 cxd4 ♖xg2+ 15 ♖f1 ♖f4 16 ♖bc3 ♖e7 17 ♖c5 ♖xb5+ 18 ♖xb5+ ♖f8 19 ♖d7+ ♖g8 20 ♖f5 provides White with a dangerous initiative.

13 ♖g3 ♖d3+ 14 ♖e2 ♖xc1+ 15 ♖xc1 exd4 16 ♖xf5 ♖b8

16...d3+? 17 ♖f1 ♖b8 18 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 19 ♖e4 ♖f7 20 ♖d2 and White is much better, because 20...♖xb2 loses to 21 ♖c4!.

17 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 18 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 19 b3! c5 20 h5

It is always useful to fix the black pawns on the dark squares in such a position. Then g7 and h6 are potential weaknesses later in the game.



20...♖f4+?

Black is so irritated by the h-pawn that he decides to exchange it immediately, but this gives White good time to develop. Better was 20...♖e7 21 ♖d1 ♖f6 22 ♖a3 ♖he8 and Black has some drawing chances.

21 ♖f1 ♖hx5

Better was perhaps 21...d3, although after 22 ♖d1 ♖d8 23 ♖a3 ♖g8 24 ♖c4 ♖e6 25 ♖g3 g6 26 ♖e1+ ♖f7 27 ♖e3! White is much

better.

22 cxd4 g6 23 ♖h4 cxd4 24 ♖xg6 ♖g8 25 ♖e5+!

This knight belongs on d3 as a blockader. After 25 ♖xf8+? ♖bxf8 26 ♖e1 (not 26 ♖d2? ♖g3+ 27 ♖e1 ♖e8+ 28 ♖d1 ♖e2 and Black is much better) 26...d3 gives Black some chances.

25...♖d6 26 ♖d3! ♖e7 27 ♖d2

White has a pawn more and a better position.

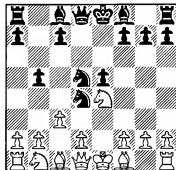
27...♖d5 28 ♖c7 ♖g5 29 ♖f3 ♖g7 30 ♖c4 ♖f6 31 ♖c5+ ♖e4 32 ♖e1+ ♖xd3 33 ♖e2 1-0

Game 9

Narciso Dublan-Kuzmin

Balaguer 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖d4 6 c3 b5 7 ♖f1 ♖xd5 8 ♖e4



8 ♖e4 is the most popular move, but White cannot count on an advantage.

8...♖e6!

This move is sufficient for equality. The ultra sharp, but also dubious, 8...♖h4?! can be found in Game 10.

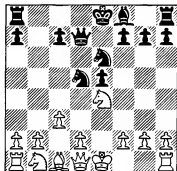
9 ♖xb5+ ♖d7 10 ♖xd7+

Best. 10 ♖a4?! is problematic due to the weakness of the d3-square. Black now has:

a) 10...f5! 11 ♖g3 ♖c5 12 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 13 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 14 d4 cxd4 15 ♖xf5 ♖e8+

16 ♖d1 ♕d3 17 ♜f1 c5 with enough compensation for the pawn, Zaitsev-Mohrlok, corr. 1959.

b) 10...♗d4 11 0-0 (if 11 d4 ♖xg2+ 12 ♖f1 ♗g4 13 ♙xf4 ♗xf4 14 ♗bd2 ♜b8 15 ♙xd7+ ♜xd7 16 ♜xd7+ ♖xd7 and Black is slightly better) 11...♕d3! with excellent compensation. The knight will stay on d3 forever. 10...♜xd7



11 0-0

White also has 11 d4 exd4 12 cxd4 (if 12 0-0 dxc3 13 ♗bxc3 ♗xc3 14 ♗xc3 ♜xd1 15 ♜xd1 ♙c5 with an equal game) 12...♗b4 13 a3 (13 0-0? ♗xd4 14 ♜e1 looks tempting at first, but after 14...0-0! 15 ♗a3 ♗dc2 Black is much better) 13...♜xd4 14 ♜a4+ c6 (Keres was convinced that this position is much better for Black; but to err is human!) 15 0-0 ♜xe4 16 axb4 ♜c8 17 ♗c3 ♜xb4 18 ♜xb4 ♙xb4 19 ♜xa7 ♙c5 20 ♜a5 ♖e7 with equality. It is still not a bad line to play for Black, of course.

11...♙e7

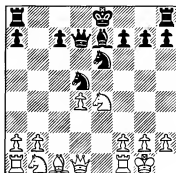
This developing move is the only really logical move here. All the alternatives are faulty:

a) 11...♗df4? 12 d4! ♜b8 (12...exd4? 13 ♙xf4 ♗xf4 14 ♜f3 ♕d5 15 ♗g5 and White wins) 13 ♜e1 ♙e7 14 ♜f3 and White is much better.

b) 11...c5? 12 d4 cxd4 13 cxd4 exd4 14 ♗g5 ♗dc7 15 ♜f3 with initiative for White according to Estrin.

c) 11...f5? is too early. 12 ♗g3 g6 13 d4 exd4 14 cxd4 ♙g7 15 ♗e2 ♜d8 16 ♗bc3 0-0 17 ♜e1! and it is difficult for Black to prove any compensation here.

12 d4 exd4 13 cxd4



13...0-0

Black can also try 13...♗b6? 14 ♙e3 ♜d8 15 ♗bc3 (if 15 ♜e1 ♗xd4 16 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 17 ♙xd4 ♜xd4 18 ♗g3 ♜d7 is roughly equal) 15...♗xd4 16 ♙xd4 ♜xd4 17 ♜e2? (or 17 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 with equality) 17...0-0 18 ♜ac1 ♜fe8 19 ♗b5 ♜e5 20 ♗ec3 ♜xe2 21 ♗xc2 ♙g5 22 ♜c2 c5 23 ♗xa7 ♜a8 24 ♗b5 ♜xa2 and the endgame is obviously level, Pilgaard-Biro, Budapest 2003.

14 ♗bc3 ♜fd8!

The best move. After 14...♜ad8? 15 ♙e3 f5 16 ♗xd5 ♜xd5 17 ♗c3 gives White some advantage: 17...♜c4 (17...♜b7? 18 ♜e2 and White is much better) and now, rather than 18 ♜b3 ♜xb3 19 axb3 f4 20 ♙c1 ♗xd4 21 ♜xa7 ♜d7 with an equal position, 18 d5! sets Black has some problems.

15 ♙e3 ♗xc3 16 bxc3 f5 17 ♗c5 ♙xc5 18 dxc5 f4

Or 18...♜c6 19 ♜h5 f4 20 ♙d4 ♗xd4 21 cxd4 ♜xd4 22 ♜ad1 ♜c4 23 ♜d5 ♜e8 24 ♜fd1 ♜ce4 with dynamic equality.

19 ♙d4

19 ♜xd7 ♜xd7 20 ♙c1 is also possible, but White can hardly hope that the extra pawn will generate an advantage. After 20...♖f7 (20...♜d3?) 21 ♜b1 ♜ad8 22 ♜b7

♙d1 23 ♙a3 ♙1d2 24 ♙xa7 ♙xa2 25 ♙a5
 ♙dd2 26 ♙c1 ♙xa5 27 ♙xd2 ♙xc5 the position
 is equal.

19...♙xd4 20 cxd4 ♙xd4 21 ♙b3+

21 ♙f3 ♙xc5 22 ♙xf4 ♙d4 23 ♙ac1 ♙d6
 24 ♙f3 ♙b8 is equal.

21...♙h8 22 ♙ac1 a5

This looks a bit suspicious. Better was the
 natural 22...♙ab8.

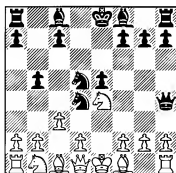
23 ♙fd1 ♙b4 24 ♙xd8+ ♙xd8 25 ♙xb4
 axb4 26 ♙f1 g5 27 ♙c4 ♙d5 28 h4 h6
 29 hxg5

Also after 29 ♙e2 ♙g7 30 ♙f3 ♙f6 31
 ♙xb4 ♙xc5 Black will keep the equilibrium.

29...hxg5 30 c6 ♙d6 31 ♙xb4 ♙xc6 32
 ♙b5 ♙c1+ 33 ♙e2 ♙c2+ 34 ♙f3 g4+
 35 ♙xf4 ♙xf2+ 36 ♙g3 ♙xa2 37 ♙c5
 ½-½

Game 10
Pilgaard-N. Pedersen
Danish Championship, Greve 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♙c4 ♠f6 4 ♠g5
 d5 5 exd5 ♠d4 6 c3 b5 7 ♙f1 ♠xd5 8
 ♠e4 ♙h4?!



This is the famous Berliner variation and
 the most common move here, but it appears
 at the moment that it does not provide the
 comfort of equality for Black.

9 ♠g3 ♙g4

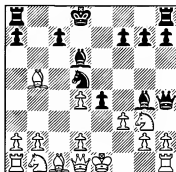
9...♙b7? is sharp and good – but only in
 blitz games. After 10 cxd4 0-0-0 11 ♙e2!

♠f4 12 0-0 ♙xd4 13 ♙f3 e4 14 ♙g4+ ♙b8
 15 ♠f5 ♙g5 16 ♠xd4 h5 17 d3 hxg4 18
 ♙xf4 ♙xf4 19 g3 ♙h6 20 h4 g5 21 dxc4
 gxh4 22 ♠f5 and White won in Wernst-
 Huizmann, Limhamn 1978.

10 f3 e4!?

Black needs to go all the way. After
 10...♠f5 11 ♙xb5+ ♙d8 12 0-0 ♙c5+ 13 d4
 exd4 14 ♠e4! White was clearly better in
 R.Webb-Lees, England 1977.

11 cxd4 ♙d6 12 ♙xb5+ ♙d8



13 ♙b3!

13 0-0 is ECO's recommendation. They
 claim that the position is unclear. In my opin-
 ion the position is virtually winning for
 White, but you need to show that you know
 the position better than your opponent, and
 that you can calculate very well. In this re-
 spect it can be compared to the Dragon: very
 dangerous, but also dubious. And while
 dragons might be dangerous, no one cries
 when they die.

After 13...exf3 we have:

a) 14 ♙xf3 ♙b8 15 a4 a6! 16 ♙f1 (16
 ♙xa6?! ♙e8 17 ♠c3 ♙xf3 18 ♙xf3 ♙xd4+
 19 ♙f2? ♙c1+ 20 ♙f1 ♙c5 and Black is
 better, Nordenbak-Pedersen, Denmark
 1994; 17...♠f6! is also possible) 16...♙c8
 (16...♙b4?) 17 ♠c3 ♠f6! 18 d3 ♙xf3 19
 ♙xf3 ♙xd4+ 20 ♙h1 ♠g4 21 ♠ce4! with a
 total mess.

b) 14 ♙b3! is still the better move, when
 Black must choose between:

b1) 14...♖b4 15 ♜xf3 c6 (or 15...♞b8 16 ♖a3 c6 17 ♜e3) 16 ♜xf7 (16 ♜e3 is also strong – Westlund) 16...cxb5 17 ♖c3 ♜e8 18 ♖xb5 ♙e6 19 ♜c3! (19 ♖xd6?! ♙xb3 20 ♖b7+ with a draw by perpetual check in Brower-Hodges, corr. 1992-94; sometimes beauty is a horrible attraction) 19...♙xf7 20 ♖xd6 ♜e1+ 21 ♖f2 ♜e7 22 d3 a5 23 ♖g1 ♜g4 24 a3 ♜c7 25 ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 26 ♙e3 ♖d5 27 ♜c6 and White wins.

b2) 14...fxg2 15 ♜xf7! (not 15 ♜f2? ♞b8! 16 ♜xd5 ♜xb5! 17 ♜xb5 ♜e8 with an enormous attack – Pliester) 15...♙c6 16 ♜d7+! ♙xd7 17 ♜xd5 ♞b8 18 ♙xd7 ♙xg3 19 ♙h3+ ♙d6 20 ♜f5 and White was much better in Schüler-Leisebein, corr. 1998.

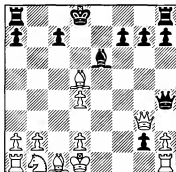
13...♙xg3+

Black has no choice. After 13...♖b4? 14 fxg4 ♙xg3+ 15 ♖d1 ♙d6 16 h3 c6 17 ♙e2 White is a piece up for nothing, or 13...♙e6? 14 fxe4 ♖b4 15 d5 ♙xg3+ 16 ♜xg3 ♜xe4+ 17 ♖f1 ♙xd5 18 d3 and White wins.

14 ♖d1 ♙e6 15 ♙c6! exf3

Black can also try 15...♖e7 16 d5! ♖xc6 17 dxe6 ♖e5 18 ♜d5+ ♖e7 19 ♜xe4! (not 19 b3?! exf3 20 ♙a3+ ♖f6! 21 ♙b2 ♜h5! and the position has started to become unclear) 19...fxe6 20 ♖c3 ♞hd8 21 ♜xh4+ ♙xh4 22 b3 ♖d3 23 ♙a3+ ♖f7 24 ♖c2 and White is much better according to Pälkövi.

16 ♙xd5 fxg2 17 ♜xg3



17...♙xh1♜+

17...♜xg3 18 hxg3 ♙xd5 was later discussed as possible improvement on the game. But it is hard to believe that Black should have enough compensation for the piece here if White develops soundly; e.g. 19 ♜g1 ♜e8 20 ♖c3 ♙f3+ 21 ♖c2 ♞b8 22 d3 followed by ♙f4 or ♖e4.

18 ♙xh1 ♜xg3 19 hxg3

White is much better. Black has no real compensation for the material deficit.

19...♞b8 20 d3 h5 21 ♖c2 f6 22 d5 ♙g4 23 ♙e3 h4 24 gxh4 ♜xh4 25 ♖d2 ♖d7 26 ♙e4?!

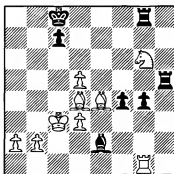
Clearer was 26 ♙xa7 ♞bh8 27 ♙g2! ♞h2 28 ♜g1 ♞a8 29 ♙e5 f5 30 ♖f1 ♞h4 31 ♖e3 and White wins.

26...f5 27 ♙g2 ♞h2?!

Black has more practical chances after 27...♜e8 28 ♙xa7 ♞h2 29 ♙f1 g5 30 a4 ♖d6 31 ♙g1, though White should still win.

28 ♜g1 ♜g8 29 ♖c3 g5 30 ♖c4 ♙e2 31 ♖e5+ ♖c8 32 ♙xa7 f4 33 ♙e4! g4 34 ♙d4 ♞h5 35 ♖g6

Now Black loses material and the game.



35...♜xg6 36 ♙xg6 ♜g5 37 ♙e4 g3 38 ♙f6 ♞h5 39 ♙d4 ♜g5 40 ♖d2 f3 41 ♖e3 f2 42 ♖xe2 fxg1N+ 43 ♙xg1 ♖d7 44 ♖f1 ♖d6 45 ♙e3 ♜g4 46 ♖g2 ♖e5 47 ♖f3 ♜g7 48 ♙f4+ ♖d4 49 ♙xg3 c5 50 dxc6 1-0

Summary

The Fritz Variation is still alive and kicking as a serious alternative to theory's darling 5...♖a5. But only if, after 6 c3 b5 7 ♖f1 ♖xd5 8 ♖c4, Black follows Game 9 (8...♖e6), and not Game 10 (8...♗h4) where someone needs to introduce a serious new idea to be back in business.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖d4 6 c3 b5 7 ♖f1 (D) ♖xd5

8 cxd4 ♗xg5 9 ♖xb5+ ♖d8 10 ♗f3 ♖b7 11 0-0 ♗b8 (D)

12 ♖c3 – Game 6

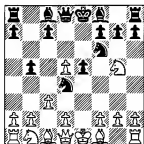
12 dxe5 – Game 7

8 h4 – Game 8

8 ♖e4 (D)

8...♖c6 – Game 9

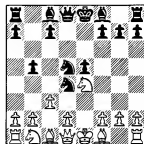
8...♗h4 – Game 10



7 ♖f1



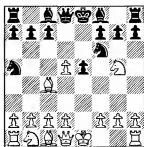
11...♗b8



8 ♖e4

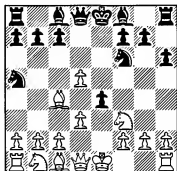
CHAPTER THREE

4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖a5: Introduction



1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5
d5 5 exd5 ♖a5

In this chapter we shall look at the minor lines connected to the absolute main line of the Two Knights. 5...♖a5 is the main move here, and one to which we shall be dedicating three chapters. Over time it has become clear that 6 ♗b5+ is the only serious move here. After that Black has 6...♗d7!? (Games 12 & 13). The main move is 6...c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 and then 8 ♗e2 is the subject of Chapter 4, but 8 ♗f3?! (Games 14 & 15) has also been played a lot. 8...h6! (Game 15) is the strongest reply, guaranteeing Black a great game.



Game 11 Rudnick-Pichler Correspondence 1985

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5
d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 d3?!

Also dubious is the rare 6 b3?! h6 7 ♖f3 e4 8 ♖e5 a6! 9 a4 ♖xc4 10 bxc4 c6! 11 ♖c3 ♗d6 12 d4 exd3 13 ♖xd3 cxd5 14 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 15 cxd5 ♗a5+ 16 ♗d2 ♗xd5 and Black is better. Perhaps all other moves than 6 ♗b5+ are mistakes!

6...h6 7 ♖f3 e4!

This aggressive move is the trouble with 6 d3.

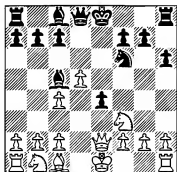
8 ♗e2

After this White manages to keep an extra pawn, but not equality. Black has no problems in the position. White has also tried:

a) 8 dxe4? (an impressive move invented by David Bronstein – but he played it only once) 8...♖xc4 9 ♗d4 and now D.Bronstein-Rojahn, Moscow Olympiad 1956, continued 9...♖b6?! 10 e4 c5? (Black is slightly better after 10...♗e7 11 e5 ♖fxd5 12 exd5 ♗xd5 13 ♗xd5 ♖xd5) 11 ♗d3 when White proved that the pawn centre offered good compensation for the piece. Stronger is 9...♖d6! 10 ♖c3 ♖fxe4! (10...c6 also gave Black the better game in L.Bronstein-Rai, Mar del Plata 1969) 11 ♖xe4 ♗e7 12 0-0 ♖xe4 13 ♗c1 f5 14 ♖d2 ♗c5 and Black has a clear advantage

(Euwe), e.g. 15 ♖e5+ ♗d8 16 ♖xe4 fxe4 17 ♖xc4 (or 17 ♖xc4 ♖c7! with exchange of queens) 17...♗d7 18 ♖c3 ♖d6 19 ♖d4 ♖f5 and Black wins.

b) 8 ♖d4 c6 9 ♖c3 a6!? (simpler is 9...♖e7 10 ♖c3 ♖g4 11 ♖d2 exd3 12 ♖xd3 ♖xd5 13 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 and the position is equal) 10 a3! cxd5 11 ♖a2 ♖g4 12 ♖de2 ♖c6 13 h3 ♖h5 (if 13...♖xe2 14 ♖xe2 ♖d4 15 ♖d1 and with the two bishops White is slightly better) 14 g4 exd3 15 cxd3 d4! 16 gxh5 dxc3 17 ♖xc3 ♖c5 18 ♖g1! and White has the initiative, though Black is also alive after 18...♗f8!. This position is hard to judge.
8...♖xc4 9 dxc4 ♖c5!



Black develops and prevents ♖f3-d4. Inferior are both 9...♖g4?! 10 h3 ♖h5 11 g4 ♖g6 12 ♖c3 ♖b4 13 ♖f4 0-0 14 ♖e5 and 9...♖e7?! 10 ♖d4 c6 11 ♖c3 0-0 12 0-0 cxd5 13 cxd5 ♖g4 14 ♖b5 and White is much better according to Keres.

10 h3

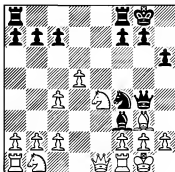
White has no alternative that includes anything remotely resembling a survival kit

a) 10 ♖f4? 0-0 11 ♖fd2 ♖g4 12 ♖f1 c6! and Black's lead in development is decisive.

b) 10 c3? b5! 11 b4 ♖e7 12 ♖fd2 ♖g4 13 f3 exf3 14 gxf3 ♖h5 15 cxb5 0-0 and Black was much better in Grob-Keres, Dresden 1936.

c) 10 0-0?! 0-0 11 ♖fd2 ♖g4 12 ♖c1 ♖d7 13 ♖b3? (but if 13 ♖c3 ♖ae8 with huge compensation) 13...♖f3! 14 ♖f4 ♖g4 15

♖g3 ♖h5! 16 ♖xc5 (or 16 gxf3 exf3 17 ♗h1 ♖xg3+ 18 fxg3 f2 19 ♖xf2 ♖ae8 and Black wins) 16...♖f4 17 ♖xe4



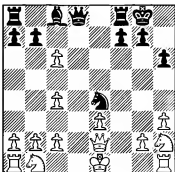
17...♖h3!! 0-1 Field-Tenner, USA 1923.

d) 10 ♖fd2?! 0-0 11 ♖b3 ♖g4 12 ♖f1 ♖b4+! 13 c3 (weakening d3, but if 13 ♖c3 c6! with terrific compensation) 13...♖e7 14 h3 ♖h5 15 ♖c3 ♖d7 16 g4 ♖g6 17 ♖d1d2 ♖e5 18 0-0-0 b5 19 cxb5 ♖d3+ 20 ♗b1 ♖xd5 21 c4 ♖e6 22 ♖d4 ♖e5 with a huge advantage for Black according to Keres.

10...0-0 11 ♖h2 c6

An interesting alternative was 11...e3!? 12 ♖xc3 ♖xc3 13 fxe3 ♖e4 14 ♖f1! (if 14 0-0 ♖g3 15 ♖d3 ♖xf1 16 ♖xf1 ♖g5 17 ♗h1 ♖f5 and Black is slightly better according to Keres) 14...♖h4+ 15 g3 ♖f6 16 c3 ♖f5 with compensation for the pawns in Korchnoi-Sliwa, Bucharest 1954.

12 dxc6 e3 13 ♖xe3 ♖xe3 14 fxe3 ♖e4



15 0-0

If 15 ♖g1? bxc6 16 ♜f3 ♜f6 17 c3 ♚b8 and the black attack is worth more than two pawns. Maybe the best try was 15 ♜f1! ♜h4+ 16 g3 ♜f6 when Black has compensation for the material according to ECO. Let us try to elaborate a bit on this: 17 c3 ♜xc6! (stronger than 17...bxc6 18 ♜bd2 ♜f5 19 ♜xe4 ♜xe4 20 ♜h2 ♜ad8 with compensation) 18 ♜f3 ♜b6 19 b4 ♜g5 20 ♜g2 ♜d7 and White's development is pathetic, or if 17 ♜bd2! ♜xb2 18 ♚b1 ♜xa2! 19 cxb7 ♚b8 and Black is better.

15...♜g3 16 ♜d2

If 16 ♜f3 ♜xf1 17 ♜xf1 ♜b6 18 b3 bxc6 and Black is better.

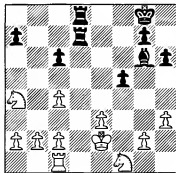
16...♜xf1 17 ♜xf1 bxc6

Even stronger was 17...♜b6! 18 cxb7 (or 18 b3 bxc6) 18...♜xb7 19 b3 ♜ad8 20 ♜c2 ♜g6 21 ♜a3 f5 and White is under heavy attack.

18 ♜xd8 ♜xd8

If the black pieces are played by a Master or Grandmaster, then I think this position is more or less won. White has more material (2♜+2♙ for ♚+♜), but he also has a weakness on e3 and no good squares for the knights. White can fight for a draw, but it is very hard work, and probably unrewarding too.

19 ♜c3 ♜f5 20 ♜c1 ♜d7 21 ♜f2 ♜ad8
22 ♜e2 ♜g6 23 ♜a4 f5



24 g4?

Rash. One thing you should never do in a worse endgame is to create weaknesses in your own pawn structure. If you cannot generate realistic counterplay, it is better to wait and see what the opponent has to offer. An important point is that it can sometimes be more difficult for the opponent to win the position, than for you to draw it. So why not let him do the work? Here White should have played 24 ♜c5 ♜e7 25 ♜f2 with a worse but playable position.

24...fxg4 25 hxg4 ♜f8 26 ♜d2 ♜df7 27 ♜f1 ♜xf1 28 ♜xf1 ♜xc2 29 ♜c3 ♜d3+ 0-1

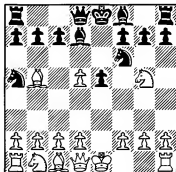
There is no sense in playing on in a position like this in correspondence chess.

Game 12

Short-Hector

Lanzarote 2003

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♜c4 ♜f6 4 ♜g5
d5 5 exd5 ♜a5 6 ♜b5+ ♜d7!?



This is an underestimated move and an excellent weapon against 'Informant's children', i.e. chess players who have learned lots of variations by heart.

7 ♜e2 ♜e7

For 7...♜d6 see Game 13.

8 ♜c3

Others:

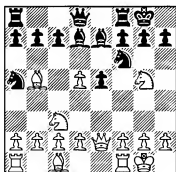
a) 8 b4 ♜xb4 transposes to 7...♜d6 8 b4 (see Game 13).

b) 8 d4? looks impressive, but it is incorrect: 8...exd4 9 b4 0-0! 10 bxa5 ♖b4+ 11 ♖d1 ♖e8 12 ♖c4 ♖xb5 13 ♖xb5 ♖xd5 with a decisive attack, e.g. 14 ♖d3 ♖e3+ 15 ♖xe3 dxc3 16 ♖xd8 e2+, or 14 h4 ♖c3+ 15 ♖xc3 dxc3+ 16 ♖d3 ♖e7!, or 14 a3 ♖xa5 15 ♖xa5 ♖c3+ 16 ♖d2 ♖f6 17 ♖xc3 dxc3+ 18 ♖d3 ♖ad8+ 19 ♖c4 ♖c6+ 20 ♖b3 ♖d5 and Black wins.

c) 8 0-0?! ♖xd5 9 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 10 d3 (not 10 ♖xe5?? f6) 10...♖c6 and Black is slightly better.

8...0-0 9 0-0

White has also tried 9 ♖xd7 (or 9 ♖ge4 ♖xe4 10 ♖xe4 ♖f5 11 ♖f3 ♖g6 12 0-0 ♖h8? with excellent play for Black) 9...♖xd7 10 0-0 ♖fe8! (10...♖xd5?! is weaker because of 11 ♖xe5 c6 12 d3 ♖fe8 13 ♖d2 ♖d6 14 ♖d4 and White is better) 11 d3 (after 11 a3 ♖xd5 12 ♖xe5 ♖xc3 13 ♖xc3 ♖xg5 14 ♖xa5 ♖f6 Black has excellent compensation for the pawn) 11...♖b4 12 ♖ge4 ♖xd5 13 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 14 ♖g4 ♖e6 and a draw was agreed in A.Sokolov-Kunte, Bled 2002.



9...♖g4?!

This is not the best way to get equal play. Black has also tried:

a) 9...♖e8 10 ♖ge4 c6 11 dxc6 ♖xc6 12 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 13 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 14 d3 ♖c8 with compensation in Felgaer-Skembris, Lido degli Estensi 2003.

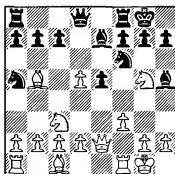
b) 9...c6! 10 dxc6 ♖xc6 11 ♖xc6 (11 ♖f3?! ♖d4 12 ♖xd4 exd4 13 ♖xd7 ♖xd7

14 ♖e4 ♖ac8 gives Black more than enough play for the pawn) 11...♖xc6 12 d3 ♖e8!? (12...♖d5 also looks promising, e.g. 13 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 14 ♖f3 ♖d6 15 ♖d2 ♖ae8 and the black initiative is worth a pawn) 13 ♖ge4 (13 ♖e3 b5! – a typical move in this kind of position – 14 ♖ge4 ♖d7 15 ♖g3 g6 with excellent play for the pawn) 13...♖d7 14 ♖g3 g6 15 ♖h1 f5 16 f3 ♖c8 17 ♖d2 b5 with very good play for the pawn, Gikas-Skembris, Athens 2003.

10 f3

As we shall see this is really risky. Probably better is 10 ♖xe5! ♖d6 11 ♖e3 (11 ♖d4? fails to 11...c5 12 ♖d3 a6 13 h3 ♖c8 14 ♖a4 b5 15 ♖xb5 axb5 16 ♖xb5 c4 17 ♖d4 ♖b7 18 d3 ♖xd5 19 ♖e3 ♖c7 20 ♖ad1 ♖h2+ 21 ♖h1 ♖e5 Short-Xie Jun, Jinan 2002, and three pawns are not enough for the piece here) 11...♖f5! (after 11...a6 12 ♖e2 ♖e8 13 ♖d3 ♖xe2 14 ♖xe2 ♖xh2+ 15 ♖xh2 ♖g4+ 16 ♖g1 ♖xg5 17 ♖c3 ♖f4 18 ♖g3 ♖xg3 19 fxg3 ♖c4 20 b3 the endgame is slightly better for White, Herbrechtsmeier-Nunn, Germany 1984) 12 f4 ♖xc2 13 d4 a6 14 ♖e2 ♖f5 15 ♖a4 b5 16 ♖c2 ♖e8 and Black is doing very well!

10...♖h5



11 ♖xe5

11 ♖d3?! gives White problems finishing his development. Sergeev-Berezjuk, Tatranska Lomnica 1998, continued 11...♖e8 12 ♖h1 c6 13 dxc6 ♖xc6 14 g4! (very commit-

tal – the weakening of the king's position ensures that Black has permanent counter-play) 14...♗g6 15 ♖xg6 hxg6 16 d3 ♘d4 17 ♗g2 ♗c8 18 ♗f2 ♗b6 19 ♘cc4 ♘e4 20 ♘e4 ♘e6 21 g5 ♗cd8 22 h4 ♖c5 23 ♗f1 ♖c3 24 ♖xe3 ♗xc3 25 ♗f2 ♗f4 with full compensation.

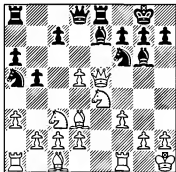
11...♗g6

Also tempting is 11...♗d6!? 12 ♗e3 a6 13 ♖e2 ♗c8 14 ♘ge4 ♖e7 15 ♗f4 ♖g6! (not 15...♘xd5?? 16 ♗f5 and Black loses a piece) 16 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 17 ♖d3 ♖xd3 18 cxd3 c5! with very good compensation.

12 ♘ge4 a6 13 ♖d3 ♗e8 14 ♖h1 b5

Or 14...♘h5!? 15 ♗d4 (if 15 g3?! f5 16 d6 cxd6 17 ♗d5+ ♖h8 18 ♘f2 ♘f6 19 ♗d4 d5 with good attacking chances) 15...♘c6! 16 ♗c4 ♘e5 17 ♗b3 ♘xd3 18 cxd3 ♘f4 with compensation for the pawns.

15 a3



15...♗b7?

Too slow. Black should have played for the initiative exploiting the exposed white queen with 15...♘h5! 16 ♗d4 (if 16 g3 ♖f6 17 ♘xf6+ ♘f6 18 ♗g5 h6 19 ♗h4 ♖xd3 20 cxd3 ♘xd5 and Black is better) 16...c5 17 ♗e3 c4 18 ♖e2 ♘f6 19 d3 ♘xd5 20 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 and Black's pressure is worth more than a pawn.

16 ♗g3 ♘h5

Possible was 16...♘d6!? 17 ♘xf6+ ♖xf6 18 ♖xg6 hxg6 19 f4 (after 19 d3 ♘f5 White has some problems with the queen) 19...♗d7

20 ♗f3 ♗ad8 21 d3 ♘f5 22 ♖d2 ♘d4 23 ♗d1 c6 24 dxc6 ♗xc6 with some practical chances.

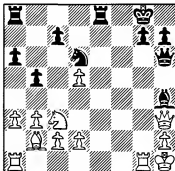
17 ♗f2 f5 18 g4! fxe4 19 gxf5 ♖h4

White is better after 19...exd3 20 hxg6 ♖c5 21 ♗g2 dxc2 22 gxh7+ ♖xh7 23 d3 ♖d4 24 ♗xc2 ♖xc3 25 d4+ ♖h8 26 ♗xc3 ♗xd5 27 ♖f4 as Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

20 ♗g2 exf3?!

Simplifying the position does not work for Black. He had no choice but to play 20...exd3 21 hxg6 dxc2 22 gxh7+ ♖xh7 23 d4 ♖h8 24 ♗xc2 ♗f6 25 ♘e2 ♘d6 26 ♘f4 ♘f5 and although Black probably does not have enough compensation, especially after 27 ♗g2!, he does have many chances of cheating White – either through some kind of elaborate trap, or simply because the position is messy.

21 ♗xf3 ♖xd3 22 ♗xd3 ♗g5 23 b3 ♘d6 24 ♖b2 ♗xh5 25 ♗h3 ♗h6 26 ♗g1!



Now Black cannot really avoid exchanging queens.

26...♖g5 27 ♗xh6 ♖xh6 28 d3

White is a clear pawn up and should win.

28...♗e7 29 ♗af1 ♗ae8 30 ♘d1 g6

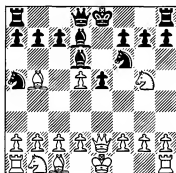
If 30...♗e2 31 ♗g2 ♖e1 32 ♖g1 and slowly, step by step, Black will lose this position.

31 c4 ♖g7 32 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 33 c5 ♘f7 34 b4 ♗e2 35 ♗g2 ♘h6 36 ♗xe2 ♗xe2 37 ♘c3 ♗d2 38 d6! cxd6 39 ♘e4 ♗c2

If 39...♙xd3 40 c6 ♖g8 41 ♚e1 ♜f8 42 c7 ♜e7 43 ♜c5 dxc5 44 ♙xe7 and White wins.
40 cxd6 ♖f7 41 d7 ♖d8 42 ♜c5 a5 43 ♚e1 axb4 44 ♜e6+ 1-0

Game 13
Morozevich-I.Sokolov
Sarajevo 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♜c6 3 ♙c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♙b5+ ♙d7 7 ♚e2 ♙d6



This is a real pawn sacrifice. Black closes the d-file and neglects taking back the pawn on d5 for a few moves. In my opinion this move is not good enough to achieve full compensation, but the game is complicated and interesting.

8 ♜c3

If 8 b4 ♙xb4 (this position can also arise after 7...♙e7 8 b4 ♙xb4) 9 ♚xc5+ ♚c7! (Estrin recommends 9...♜f8!? 10 ♙xd7 ♚xd7 11 0-0 ♚e8 12 ♚g3 ♚xd5 with a unclear game) 10 ♙xd7+ ♜xd7 11 ♚xc7+ ♙xc7 12 ♜c4 ♖b6 13 ♖bc3 0-0-0 and the position is roughly equal.

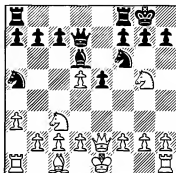
8...0-0

Maybe Black should try to improve with 8...c6!? 9 dxc6 (or 9 ♖ge4 ♜xe4 10 ♜xe4 ♙c7 11 dxc6 ♜xc6 12 c3 0-0 13 0-0 a6 14 ♙a4 b5 15 ♙b3 ♖a5 16 ♙c2 f5) 9...♜xc6 10 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 11 0-0 0-0 12 d3 ♙c7 13 ♚e1 ♚d7 with compensation.

9 ♙xd7

Better than 9 0-0 ♜xd5 10 ♙xd7 ♜xc3 11 dxc3 ♚xd7 with equality, or 10...♜f4!? 11 ♚g4 h5 12 ♚f3 ♚xg5 13 d3 with unclear play – objectively White might be better, but this has little practical importance.

9...♚xd7 10 a3!



The best move. White prevents ...♙d6-b4 and does so with tempo by threatening b2-b4.

After 10 0-0 Black has two ways to achieve counterplay:

a) 10...b6 11 d3 ♚ac8 12 ♖ge4 ♙c7 13 ♜xf6+ ♙xf6 14 ♜e4 ♙d8 15 c4 f5 16 ♜c3 ♖b7 and Black has some compensation for the pawn.

b) 10...c6! 11 dxc6 ♜xc6 12 d3 ♜d4 13 ♚d1 ♚ac8 14 ♙e3 (14 a3!? is a possible improvement, targeted against Black's next move) 14...♙a3! 15 ♙xd4 (15 ♙c1 was probably better, but Black has good play for the pawn) 15...exd4 16 ♖ge4 ♜xe4 17 ♜xe4 ♙xb2 18 ♚b1 ♙a3 and Black is slightly better, Sulskis-Beliavsky, Koszalin 1998.

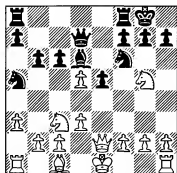
10...b6 11 d3

If 11 0-0 ♖b7 12 b4 a5 with counterplay according to Pálkövi.

11...c6!?

Better was 11...♖b7 12 ♖ge4? (if 12 0-0 a6 13 ♜f3 ♚ac8 or 12 b4 a5! with counterplay) 12...♜xe4 13 dxe4 f5 14 0-0! (castling short the white king will only be safe in his grave) 14...f4 15 f3 ♙c5+ 16 ♜h1 ♚f6! with a deadly attack in Rabello-Costa, Brazil 1997.

White should prefer 14 ♖e3 or else 14 exf5 followed by 15 ♖e3 and 16 0-0-0.



12 b4 13 dxc6 ♖xc6 14 Qc4 Qd7

In my opinion it was better to play 14...Qxc4 15 ♖xc4 ♖xe4+ 16 Qxc4 ♖c7 17 Qd2 f5 18 Qg3 g6 with compensation.

15 ♖f3! ♖e7?!

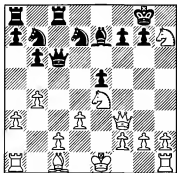
After 15...f5 16 Qxd6 ♖xf3 17 Qxf3 Qxd6 18 Qd2 e4 19 Qd4 ♖fe8 20 ♖b2 Black could sing along to the hit song in this variation: 'Where is my compensation?'. (Just imagine some lousy beats and a skinny young blonde singer and you are there!) However, this was still a better solution.

16 Qxh7!

The queen hangs on c6, so the knight is taboo.

16...♖fc8

Of course not 16...Qxh7?? 17 Qg5+.



17 Qhg5!

But not 17 ♖h3? f6! and the knight on h7 is trapped! Arnold-Iruzubieta, Oropesa del Mar 1996, continued 18 0-0 Qd8 19 f4 cxf4 20 ♖xf4 ♖c6 21 ♖h5 ♖f7 22 ♖f5 ♖c6 23 ♖h5 ♖f7 24 ♖f5 and the game was drawn. Most likely Sokolov did not know this game, as the improvement is rather easy for a strong grandmaster to see, though computer programs do not understand such things as trapped pieces.

17...f6 18 Qh3 ♖xc2 19 0-0

White has an extra pawn and a safe king.

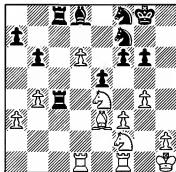
19...Qd8 20 ♖e3 ♖c6 21 d4!

Eliminating the last weakness in the white camp. From here on it is just technique for a world class player like Morozevich.

21...Qf7 22 ♖ad1 Qf8 23 ♖g4 ♖e6 24 ♖xe6 Qxe6 25 d5 Qf8 26 d6 ♖d8 27 g4 ♖c4 28 f3 g6 29 Qh1!

But not 29 Qh2?? f5! 30 gxf5 gxf5 and White loses a piece!

29...♖ac8 30 Qhf2



30...Qd7

If 30...f5 31 gxf5 gxf5 32 ♖g1+ Qh8 33 Qg5 and White wins.

31 ♖g1 Qf8 32 ♖g3! ♖c2 33 h4! ♖e2 34 ♖d2 f5

Or 34...♖c4 35 Qg2 f5 36 gxf5 gxf5 37 Qf1 ♖xd2 38 Qxd2 ♖xh4 39 Qe2 and White wins.

35 gxf5 ♖xh4 36 ♖h3 ♖xf2

Black cannot escape. If 36...gxf5 37 ♖xh4 fxe4 38 Qxc4 ♖c4 39 ♖g4 and White wins.

37 fxg6!

The black knight is strangely out of squares.

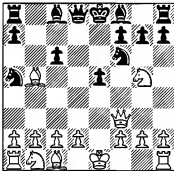
37...♠xd2

If 37...♠d8 38 ♠h7! and White has a mating attack.

38 ♠xd2 ♠xd6 39 ♠e4 ♠xe4 40 ♠h8+ ♠g7 41 ♠xc8 1-0

Game 14
Spiegel-Mari Arul
Calcutta 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♠c4 ♠f6 4 ♠g5 d5 5 exd5 ♠a5 6 ♠b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 8 ♠f3?!



This move was quite popular in the middle of the 19th century. It was reintroduced in tournament practice in the 1920's by grandmaster Efim Bogolubow and after that was a frequent guest in tournaments until the 1980's. Now the reputation of this move is bleak. Black receives more active and dangerous play for the pawn(s) than in the main lines with 8 ♠c2.

8...♠b8!?

Not as strong as 8...h6 (see Game 15) but interesting nevertheless. The alternatives are:

a) 8...cxb5? only *looks* interesting. After 9 ♠xa8 Black does not have enough compensation for the material; e.g. 9...♠d7 (if 9...♠c7 10 ♠c3 ♠c5 11 ♠f3!, or 9...♠d5 10 ♠c3 ♠c7 11 ♠xa7 ♠c6 12 ♠b6 ♠d4 13

0-0, or 9...♠c5 10 0-0 0-0 11 b4! ♠xb4 12 ♠c3) 10 ♠f3 ♠b7 11 ♠e2 ♠e7 12 d3 ♠c6 13 c3 0-0 14 0-0 ♠d5 15 ♠h3! ♠e8 16 ♠d2 f5 17 ♠b3 and White is much better – Estrin.

b) 8...♠c7?! is a bit slow, e.g. 9 ♠d3 ♠e7 (or 9...♠d6 10 ♠c3 ♠g4 11 ♠b5 ♠xf3 12 ♠xc7+ ♠xc7 13 gxf3 ♠d5 and White is better after 14 a3! or 14 h4!) 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♠f5 ♠b7 12 d3 c5 13 ♠h3 g6 14 ♠e4 and White stands slightly better, Kamishev-Sopkov, USSR 1949.

c) 8...♠e7!? (another interesting move, about as strong as 8...♠b8?) 9 ♠xc6+ (if 9 ♠d3 0-0 10 ♠c3 h6 11 ♠g4 ♠d5 12 ♠g3 g6! and Black has compensation – Van der Wiel) 9...♠xc6 10 ♠xc6+ ♠d7 11 ♠c4 0-0 12 ♠c3 ♠c8 13 ♠e2 h6 14 ♠f3 e4 15 ♠e5 ♠e6 and Black has full compensation since White has problems developing; e.g. 16 b3? ♠xc3 17 dxc3 ♠a5 18 ♠d2 ♠xe5 and Black is much better, or 16 0-0?! ♠d4! 17 ♠b5 ♠c5 18 ♠c6 ♠d6 19 ♠a5 ♠b6 with a killer attack (20...♠g4 is a great threat, and 20 h3 ♠xh3 does not improve things!), or if 16 h3 ♠d4 17 ♠g4 ♠xg4 18 hxg4 ♠fd8 with strong compensation for the pawns. Probably 'advantage Black' is a more accurate evaluation of the position.

9 ♠d3

White has no reasonable alternative:

a) 9 ♠e2? ♠e7 10 ♠c3 0-0 11 d3 ♠d5! 12 ♠ge4 f5 and Black is simply better.

b) 9 ♠a4? ♠b4 10 ♠b3 ♠xb3 11 axb3 h6 12 ♠h3 ♠e4+ 13 ♠f1 ♠g4 and Black wins.

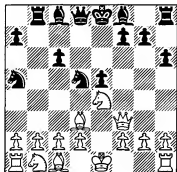
c) 9 ♠xc6+? ♠xc6 10 ♠xc6+ ♠d7 11 d3 (if 11 ♠f3 ♠b6 12 ♠e4 ♠b7 13 ♠e2 ♠g6 with an attack, or 11 d4 ♠c7 12 h4 h6 13 ♠e4 0-0 14 ♠bc3 ♠b6 and Black has full compensation for the pawns) 11...♠e7 12 ♠f3 0-0 13 ♠c3 ♠b6 14 ♠a4 ♠b7 15 ♠xa7 ♠c5 16 ♠a5 f5 and Black has a strong attack according to Pálkövi.

9...h6

9...♠e7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♠c3 h6 12 ♠h3 ♠g4 13 ♠g3 ♠d7 14 ♠c2 ♠xe2 15 ♠xe2

♠d6 16 d3 e4 also gave Black good compensation for the pawn in Sakharov-Voronov, USSR 1971.

10 ♖e4 ♘d5!



A standard move in this line. Black avoids exchanges as the white pieces are exposed in the centre, while the black pieces are mostly threatening.

11 b3

White needs to get his bishop out sometime. After 11 ♘g3?! g6 12 0-0 ♠g7 13 ♖c3 0-0 14 ♠e2 ♚b4 15 ♘xd5 cxd5 16 ♚a3 ♖c6 Black is better, Estrin-Ragozin, USSR 1955. 11 ♖bc3?! ♘f4 12 ♠f1 f5 13 ♘g3 g6 also leaves Black in the driving seat.

11...♘f4!

The right method of annoying White. The slower 11...g6?! 12 ♚g3 ♘f4 13 ♠b2 ♠g7 14 ♠a3 ♖b7 15 ♠a6 c5 16 f3 leaves White slightly better according to Van der Wiel.

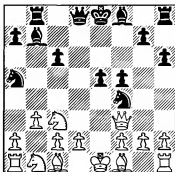
12 ♠f1?

In times of emergency, all troops must return home! Of course this is a bad idea in a sharp chess middlegame. Necessary was the unpleasant 12 ♠b2 ♘xd3+ 13 ♚xd3 ♚xd3 14 cxd3 f6 with excellent compensation for Black.

12...f5 13 ♖ec3

After 13 ♘g3 g5! 14 ♖e2 e4 15 ♚e3 ♚e7 16 ♖bc3 ♠g7 17 ♘xf4 gxf4 18 ♚c5 ♠f8 19 ♚d4 ♚g8 Black is clearly better.

13...♠b7



14 d3?

White's main problem is the knight on f4. It was a good idea to get rid of it with 14 ♖c2! c5 (14...♚f6? 15 ♚c3! and wins is a clever point) 15 ♚c3 ♘g6 (wild is 15...♘d5!? 16 ♚xe5+ ♚f7 17 ♚xf5+ ♘f6 18 ♖bc3 g6 19 ♚h3 ♠d6 with a completely unclear position, but one probably easier to play as Black) 16 ♘g3 f4 17 ♠d3 ♘h4 18 ♖e4 ♖c6! and Black has wonderful compensation for the pawn. But still... it is a fight.

14...c5 15 ♚g3 ♚f6!

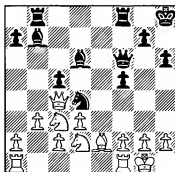
Black is much better here.

16 ♠xf4 exf4 17 ♚xf4 ♠d6 18 ♚a4+ ♖c6 19 ♠e2 0-0

And now he is winning.

20 ♚c4+ ♚h8 21 0-0 ♘d4 22 ♘d2

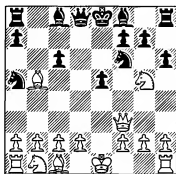
Losing a piece, but there is no salvation. If 22 ♠d1 ♚h4 23 g3 ♚h3 24 f3 ♠xg3 25 hxg3 ♚xg3+ 26 ♚h1 ♚f6 and Black wins.



22...♖g5 23 ♠de4 fxe4 24 dxe4 ♜be8
 25 ♜d3 ♠xe2+ 26 ♠xe2 ♠xe4 27 ♜h3
 ♠f5 28 f4 ♖g6 29 ♜f3 ♠g4 30 ♜d5
 ♠xe2 31 f5 ♜f6 32 ♜f2 ♜xa1+ 0-1

Game 15
Van der Wiel-Spassky
Reggio Emilia 1986/87

1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♠c4 ♠f6 4 ♠g5
 d5 5 exd5 ♠a5 6 ♠b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
 8 ♜f3?! h6!



This move was first introduced in a game by two Masters in the Soviet Union in 1955. After this game grandmaster Mark Taimanov was sure that Black is doing well in this line. Grandmaster (in correspondence chess) Yakov Estrin was convinced that White is better. Who was right? Well, see the game!

9 ♠e4

After 9 b4? ♠g4! 10 ♠xc6+ ♠xc6 11 ♜xc6+ ♠d7 12 ♜c3 hxg5 13 ♜xe5+ ♜e7 14 ♜xe7+ ♠xe7 Black is better. The three pawns are not enough for the piece here.

9...♠d5 10 ♠bc3

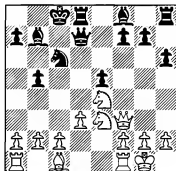
10 ♠e2 ♠e7 11 ♜g3 is also possible. The authors of *ECO* believe that this position is much better for White, whereas Pálkövi believes that Black has a strong initiative after 11...0-0 12 d3 ♠h4. However, they only give words and assumptions, not moves. So instead of believing them, we will check the position: 13 ♜xe5 (necessary; 13 ♜f3? looks

terrible and after 13...f5 14 ♠g3 ♜b8 Black is much better) 13...f5 14 ♠ec3 (not 14 ♠g3?? ♠f6 and White loses the queen) 14...♜e8 15 ♜d4 (the only move) 15...♠f6 16 ♜a4 (another only move) 16...♜b8! and White's position is unco-ordinated and his scattered forces will always be passive. 12 ♜xe5 f5 13 ♠ec3 ♠d6 14 ♜d4 ♠f4 gives Black similarly strong play. So it seems that Pálkövi is correct and that after 10 ♠e2?! White is balancing on the edge.

10...cxb5 11 ♠xd5 ♠b7

Also good is 11...♠e6 12 ♠e3 ♜c8 13 0-0 ♜d7 14 ♠g3 h5 15 c3 ♠c6! 16 ♠d1 h4 and Black was much better in Gikas-Balashov, Lugano 1988.

12 ♠e3 ♜d7 13 0-0 ♠c6 14 d3 0-0-0



Black has excellent compensation for the pawn.

15 c3 g6

Preparing ...f7-f5.

16 a4 b4

There is no reason for Black to allow White to open the a-file for his rook.

17 ♠f6 ♜e6 18 ♠fd5?

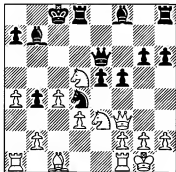
After this White is in a nasty pin and without counterplay. Better was 18 ♠d1! planning to exchange queens with 19 ♜g4. Nevertheless Black has 18...♠g7! 19 ♠e4 ♠a5 20 ♜e2 ♠b3 21 ♜b1 f5 22 ♠d2 ♠xd2 23 ♠xd2 f4 maintaining his attack.

18...f5 19 c4

A sad but necessary move. Now the black

knight enters the glorious d4-square.

19...♠d4



20 ♖h3?!

Slightly preferable was 20 ♖d1 f4 21 ♘c2 ♘b3 and Black is much better.

20...g5 21 ♜e1 ♜g8 22 ♖h5 g4 23 ♙f1

If 23 a5 ♜g5 24 ♖h4 f4 25 ♙f1 ♙f5 and Black wins.

23...♙c2 24 ♜f4 ♙xa1 25 ♜xe5 ♜g6 26 ♜e7!

A nice move, but insufficient of course.

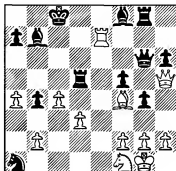
26...♜d7?

Often tricks like this are useful to gain time on the clock, but not here. Black should play 26...♜xd5! immediately and the game is over.

27 ♜e8+ ♜d8 28 ♜e7?

White was given a last chance and should have taken it with 28 ♜xg6! ♜xg6 29 ♜xf8 ♜xd5 30 ♜xd8+ ♙xd8 31 cxd5 ♘b3 32 ♘g3 and Black would have to play very carefully to win this ending.

28...♜xd5!



29 ♜c7+ ♙d8 30 ♖h4+

Or 30 ♜xg6 ♜xg6 31 cxd5 ♜xd5 and Black wins.

30...♙e8 31 cxd5 ♜g7

White does not have any real compensation for the piece.

32 ♘e3 ♘b3 33 h3 ♙d4 34 ♙f1 ♜xc7

35 ♜xc7 ♜e7 36 ♜g3 f4 37 ♜xg4

♜xd3+ 38 ♙g1 fxe3 0-1

Summary

$6... \text{d}d7?$ is a good alternative to $6...c6$ and, most importantly, there is plenty of room for independent ideas and analysis. In the line $6...c6$ 7 dxc6 bxc6 then 8 Wf3 ? is a just weak move. Nevertheless, Black must know how to meet it, and the best way is with $8...h6!$.

1 e4 e5 **2** $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}c6$ **3** $\text{d}c4$ $\text{d}f6$ **4** $\text{d}g5$ $d5$ **5** exd5 $\text{d}a5$ (D) **6** $\text{d}b5+$

6 $\text{d}3$ – Game 11

6...c6

$6... \text{d}d7$ **7** $\text{W}e2$ (D)

$7... \text{d}e7$ – Game 12

$7... \text{d}d6$ – Game 13

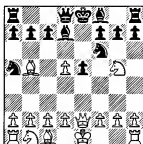
7 dxc6 bxc6 **8** $\text{W}f3$ (D)

$8... \text{b}b8$ – Game 14

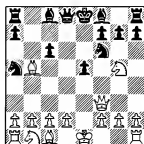
$8...h6$ – Game 15



$5... \text{d}a5$



$7 \text{W}e2$



$8 \text{W}f3$

CHAPTER FOUR

4 ♘g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖a5: Main Line



1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♜c6 3 ♞c4 ♟f6 4 ♘g5
d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♞b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♞e2 h6

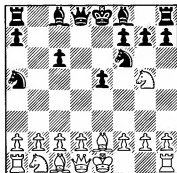
This has been the main line of the 4 ♘g5 Two Knights since the great Russian Mikhail Chigorin demonstrated Black's resources at the end of the 19th century. To this day it is still played occasionally by strong grandmasters, most recently by Morozevich and Sutovsky. The line does not seem to offer White an advantage – for the pawn Black has space and a lead in development – but the position is complicated enough for both players to play for a full point.

9 ♘h3 is a very old idea by Wilhelm Steinitz, though it did not bring him a lot of success in his games against Chigorin. In the 1960's Robert Fischer brilliantly reintroduced 9 ♘h3 to the top tournaments, and the same happened in the 1990's when Nigel Short had success with the move. Recently Ukrainian players have contributed enormously to the development of the variation. At the beginning of 2003 there was a very strong theme tournament in Kiev, in which all the games started from the position after 9 ♘h3. There it was convincingly proved that Black's chances are at least equal: White's results +12 =20 -16 say it all. What is most surprising, though, is that over 40% of the games were

drawn. Usually this line does not give rise to so many draws, and it can therefore be useful when a win is required and a draw is equivalent to half-point loss (which should really be the case in all games!).

Game 16 Malakhatko-Timoshenko Kiev 2003

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♜c6 3 ♞c4 ♟f6 4 ♘g5
d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♞b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♞e2



The main alternative, 8 ♞f3, was examined in Games 14 & 15 in the previous chapter. White has also tried two inferior bishop retreats:

a) 8 ♙f1? h6 9 ♘h3 ♙c5 10 d3 ♚b6 11 ♚e2 ♙g4 12 f3 ♙xh3 13 gxf3 0-0-0 and Black is much better, Steinitz-Chigorin, Havana 1892.

b) 8 ♙d3? ♘d5 9 ♘e4 f5 10 ♘g3 ♘f4 11 ♙f1 ♙c5 12 c3 ♙b6 13 d4 ♘g6 14 ♙d3 0-0 15 b4 ♘b7 and Black is much better, Castaldi-Keres, Stockholm 1937.

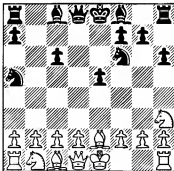
8...h6

There are some minor alternatives here:

a) 8...♙e7? is very rare and nothing special. Nevertheless, it is not as bad as many theoreticians and might be a useful weapon against players who know all theoretical lines but nothing about playing chess. After 9 d3 0-0 10 ♘c3 ♘d5 11 ♘ge4 f5 12 ♘g3 ♘b7 Black has the standard play for the pawn.

b) 8...♙c5? is risky, as after 9 d3 0-0 10 ♘c3 h6 11 ♘ge4 White has managed to retreat in a much more comfortable manner. Fischer-Gould, Houston 1964, continued 11...♘xc4 12 ♘xc4 ♙e7 13 0-0 ♘b7 14 ♚h1 ♙f5 15 ♙f3 and White is much better.

9 ♘h3!



9...♙e7

According to the Ukrainian GM Georgy Timoshenko, 9...♙e7 is underestimated by theory. The other black moves 9...g5, 9...♙d6 and 9...♙c5 are considered in Games 17, 18 and 19 respectively.

10 d3 0-0 11 ♘g1?

In an open position a move like this should always be bad. Preferable was 11 ♘c3

and now:

a) 11...♚c7 12 0-0 ♙xh3?! (better is 12...♚b8 with compensation; there is no reason to capture on h3 just yet as the knight has nowhere to go) 13 gxf3 ♚ad8 14 ♚e1 ♚fe8 15 ♙f3 ♘b7 16 ♙d2 ♚c8 17 ♙g2 ♙f8 18 ♚e2 ♘d6 19 ♘e4 and White was much better in Taborov-Kruppa, Kiev 2003.

b) 11...♚b8 (the most natural move) 12 0-0 ♚c7 (weaker is 12...♚b4?! 13 ♚h1 ♙xh3 14 gxf3 ♚h4 15 ♚g1 ♙xh3 16 ♚f1 and White is better) 13 f4 ♙xh3 14 gxf3 exf4 15 ♙xf4 ♙d6 16 ♙xh6 ♙e5 (16...♙xh2+? 17 ♚h1 gxf6 18 ♚xf6 ♙e5 19 ♚g1+ ♚h7 20 ♘e4 would give White a crushing attack) 17 ♙c1 ♙xh2+ 18 ♚h1 ♚fe8 with compensation for the pawn according to Timoshenko.

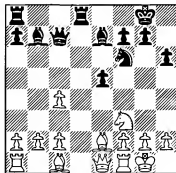
11...c5 12 ♘f3

If this is where White wants the knight then 9 ♘f3 might come into consideration! Of course what White wanted was to avoid ...e5-c4, but giving two tempi to do so is too much.

12...♚c7 13 ♘bd2 ♚d8 14 0-0 c4!

Black's prospects in the position are based solely on his lead in development. Therefore he has no second thoughts about giving up a second pawn to accelerate the assault on the white position.

15 ♚e1 ♙b7 16 ♘xc4 ♘xc4 17 dxc4



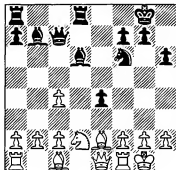
White has managed to win another pawn, but not to develop his queenside. It shortly becomes clear that his priorities have not

been the best.

17...e4 18 Qd2!

The most natural square, but the knight was needed on the kingside. Better was 18 Qh4, although after 18...Qc8! 19 g3 Qh3 20 Qg2 Qb7! Black is aiming forcefully at both b2 and g2, e.g. 21 b3 e3 22 f3 Qc5 23 a3 a5 White is under great pressure.

18...Qd6



19 Qb3

If 19 Qh1 Qxh2 20 g3 e3+ 21 Qxh2 exd2 22 Qxd2 Qd4! 23 f3 Qe8 and Black wins because of 24 Qf4 Qxf4 25 gxf4 Qxf4+ 26 Qg1 Qg5+ 27 Qh2 Qh5 28 Qf2 Qf4 and White is tangoed.

19...Qxh2+ 20 Qh1 Qe5 21 c3

21 Qa5 Qe7 22 Qc5 Qd6 23 Qe3 Qa6 24 Qd2 Qac8 also grants Black fantastic compensation.

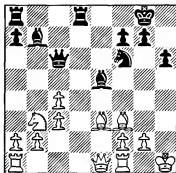
21...e3 22 Qxe3 Qc6 23 Qf3??

White completely forgets about his king's frailty. 23 f3 Qh5 24 Qa5 was necessary, when Black has to find 24...Qg6! 25 Qxb7 Qg3+ 26 Qg1 and then:

a) 26...Qe8? 27 Qd1! (if 27 Qc5 Qh5 28 Qd3 Qc2+ 29 Qf2 Qg3+ 30 Qxe2 Qxe1 and Black wins) 27...Qxf1 28 Qxf1 Qg3 29 Qc2 Qh2+ 30 Qf2 Qg3+ (30...Qg3+ 31 Qg1 only gives a draw) 31 Qe2 Qf4 32 Qc4 Qxc3 33 Qxc3 f5 and Black has a strong attack for the piece.

b) 26...Qh5! 27 f4 Qxc2+ 28 Qf2 Qxf4 29 Qxf4 Qxf4 30 Qe3 Qxg2 31 Qxg2 Qg6+

32 Qf2 Qd3 33 Qe5 Qg4! 34 Qe1 f6 35 Qe7 Qg5 and Black wins all the same. Nevertheless Black had plenty of chances to mess up the attack here, and should have been given the opportunity to do so.



23...Qxf3! 0-1

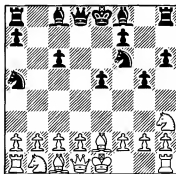
After 24 gxf3 Qxf3+ 25 Qg1 Qg4 mate on h2 cannot be prevented.

Game 17

Timoshenko-Vysochin

Kiev 2003

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qc4 Qf6 4 Qg5 d5 5 exd5 Qa5 6 Qb5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 8 Qe2 h6 9 Qh3 g5!



A very promising move in the sense that it should be good for tournament play. The reason is that Black has a simple plan: pure murder one!

10 d3

Also possible is 10 c3 ♖d5 11 f3 ♙xh3 12 gxh3 ♖b7 13 ♖a4 ♖c5 14 ♖c4 ♖e6 15 b4 ♖f4 16 ♖xd5 cxd5 17 ♙b5+ ♖d8 with unclear play.

10...♙g7

Black has tried or considered several other moves:

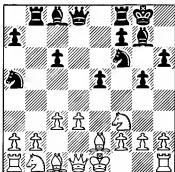
a) 10...♙g8!? 11 ♖g1 (if 11 ♖c3 ♙b8 12 ♖g1 c5 13 ♖f3 ♖c6 14 0-0 ♙c6 15 b3 g4 16 ♖d2 ♖d4 17 ♖de4 ♖d7 with good compensation for the pawn) 11...g4 12 ♖d2 ♙e6 13 ♖f1 h5 14 ♖e3 ♙b8 15 c3 c5 16 ♖a4+ ♙d7 (more natural than 16...♖d7?! 17 h3 f5 18 hxg4 hxg4 19 f3 gxh3 20 ♙xf3 and White is much better, Kruppa-Kosikov, Kiev 2003) 17 ♖c2 ♙c6! with excellent play.

b) 10...g4!? 11 ♖g1 ♙c5 12 ♖c3 ♙b8 and Black has good play.

c) 10...♙b8 11 ♖g1 c5?! (this is too slow and gives White more time to consolidate; it also occupies the c5-square from where both the knight and bishop can be very active. Better was 11...g4!? to keep the white knight on g1) 12 ♖d2 ♖c6 13 ♖c4 g4 14 c3 ♙g8 15 h3 h5 16 hxg4 hxg4 17 g3 and White was better in Timoshenko-Sergeev, Kiev 2003.

11 ♖g1

After 11 ♖d2 0-0 12 ♖g1 ♙b8 13 ♖b3 ♖xb3 14 axb3 a6 Black has fine play. He is close to being fully developed, whereas White is not even in the neighbourhood.

11...0-0 12 c3 ♙b8 13 ♖f3**13...♖d5**

Black need not insist on keeping the queens on the board. After 13...e4!? 14 dxe4 ♖xd1+ 15 ♙xd1 ♖xe4 16 0-0 ♖c4 and Black has a good initiative for the pawn; e.g. 17 ♙b3 ♙a6 18 ♖d4 ♖a5 19 ♖d1 ♙bd8 with good play.

14 0-0 g4 15 ♖e1

Or 15 ♖fd2 f5 with compensation.

15...f5 16 g3?!

This seems a little irrational. One should try to avoid moving pawns in front of one's own king, as it will be easier for the attacker to find a way to open the position. While this of course does not count in all positions, for this one it certainly does. Nevertheless, after 16 b4 ♖b7 17 a3 ♙e6 Black has good compensation anyway.

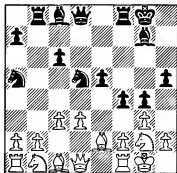
16...h5 17 ♖g2

17 c4?! would leave the d4-square weak for ever, and after 17...♖c7 18 ♖c3 ♖e6 Black's attack is probably decisive.

17...c5?

Black has compensation for the pawn because of his lead in development. But the slow manoeuvring of his knight to c6 costs two moves, and allows White to put a knight on c4 in the meantime.

Instead Black should act with great virility and play 17...f4!



18 ♖d2! (after 18 f3? Black has 18...♙xb2! 19 ♙xb2 ♖b6+ 20 ♖f2 ♖xb2 21 ♖d2 ♖xc3 22 ♖c1 ♖xe2+ 23 ♙xc2 ♖d4+ 24 ♖h1

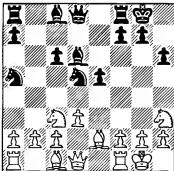
well) 11 dxe5 ♗xe5 12 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 13 ♖f4 ♗f5 14 ♖d3 ♗d4 15 ♖d2 ♗e8 16 ♖f3 ♗b6 17 ♖fe5 c5 with excellent attacking chances for Black in the 2000 Internet blitz game, Short-Golod. This would be rather insignificant if it were not that Short is the greatest expert on the 9 ♖h3 line, and his games, even blitz games, are always interesting.

b) 10 d3 (the most flexible move, but often it will simply transpose) 10...0-0 11 0-0 (11 ♖c3 transposes to the game) 11...♗b8 12 ♖h1 (after 12 c3 c5 13 ♖d2 ♖c7 14 ♖e4 ♗c7 15 f4 ♖xe4 16 dxe4 ♗d8 17 ♖c2 ♗xh3 18 gxh3 exf4 19 ♗xf4 ♗d6 20 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 Black was able to claim compensation in Timoshenko-Sergeev, Kiev 2003) 12...c5 13 ♖g1 ♖c7 14 ♖d2 ♗d8 15 ♖e1 ♖c6 16 c3 ♗f5 17 ♖c4 ♗f8 18 f4! e4 19 dxe4 ♖xe4 20 ♖f3 and White is slightly better according to Timoshenko.

10...0-0 11 d3 ♖d5

11...♗b8 12 ♗f3 ♖c7 13 ♖g1 c5 14 ♖ge2 c4 15 ♖g3 ♗d8 16 0-0 ♗a6 17 ♗e2 ♗b4 18 ♗d1 ♖c6 led to a draw in Malakhatko-Sergeev, Kiev 2003

12 0-0!



White should not fear ...♗xh3 as the weakness of the light squares is balanced by Black giving up his light-squared bishop. Also possible was 12 ♖e4? ♗c7 13 c4 ♖c7 14 0-0 f5 15 ♖c3 g5 16 ♖h1 ♖g6 17 b4 ♖b7 18 f3 ♖d6 19 ♗c3 and White was slightly better in Kamsky-Yusupov, Tilburg

1992.

12...♖xc3?

This exchange does not improve the black position in any way. Better was 12...♖c7? with the standard plan: ...♗b8, ...c6-c5-c4 etc.

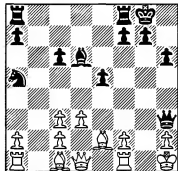
13 bxc3

Now due to Black's last move, White can finish his development and take control over the centre. The price for this is very low: a mere pawn.

13...♗h4 14 ♖h1! ♗xh3?!

In fact this pawn is not worth the bishop. White also gets the open g-file. Black still has some compensation after 14...g5 15 ♖g1 ♗a4 although White is better here.

15 gxh3 ♖xh3



White has returned the pawn, but now has the bishop pair and the open g-file which give him the better game. The white king might seem fragile at first glance, but Black having no light-squared bishop, it is all an illusion.

16 ♗g1 f5

16...c4 17 ♗g2 ♗fd8 was probably better. Now it is easy for White to improve his position.

17 ♗g3!

White takes over the initiative. 17 ♖f1 ♖xf1 18 ♗xf1 ♖h7 19 ♗g2 ♗ab8 20 c4 is only slightly better for White.

17...♗h4 18 ♖g1 ♖h8!? 19 ♖g2!

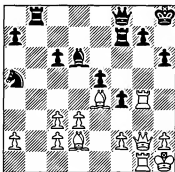
White wants to win without granting the opponent any counterplay. After 19 ♗xg7

♠g8 20 ♞g6 f4 21 ♖g4! ♜xg4 22 ♞xg4 ♜xg4
23 ♜xg4 ♜c5 24 f3 ♞b8 Black would have
some drawing chances.

19...f4 20 ♞g4 ♜e7 21 ♜d2 ♞ab8 22
♠g1 ♞f7 23 ♜f3 ♜f8

Personally I prefer to die in battle, so my
choice is this position would have been
23...♞b2. Nevertheless, after 24 ♜h3 ♜f8 25
♜h5! ♞b7 26 ♜xc6 the battle would be
quite short.

24 ♜e4



White is orchestrating a light square sym-
phony – a requiem to mourn the death of the
black king.

24...♜e7 25 ♞g6 ♜f6 26 c4 ♞b7 27
♜xc6

Black's position is deteriorating rapidly.

27...♞c5 28 ♜d5 ♞c7 29 ♜c3 ♜e7 30
♜h3 ♜h7 31 ♜f5 ♜h8 32 ♜h5 ♜f8 33
♜xe5 1-0

Game 19

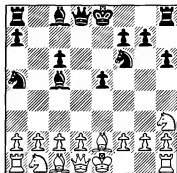
A. Petrosian-Mikhailchishin

Dortmund 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♞f3 ♞c6 3 ♜c4 ♞f6 4 ♞g5
d5 5 exd5 ♞a5 6 ♜b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♜e2 h6 9 ♞h3 ♜c5

In the most recent edition of *ECO* this is
the second main line (after 9...♜d6). But in
my opinion Black will find an easier game in
the sidelines 9...g5 and 9...♜e7. So why are
these moves not the main lines? How is this

possible? Well, fashion also rules chess. Many
people analyse the positions after 15 moves
trying to improve on previous players'
choices, when all their problems could be
solved by rewinding a few moves.



10 d3!

A tricky move order. Others:

a) 10 0-0 g5! is similar to the 9...g5 line and
then the game could continue 11 ♜h1 (11
c3!? ♜b6 12 b4 ♞b7 13 d4 exd4 14 ♜f3
♞d5 15 ♞e1+ ♜f8 leads to an unclear position)
11...g4 12 ♞g1 ♞e4 13 ♜xg4 ♜d4
(13...♞xf2+ 14 ♞xf2 ♜xf2 15 ♜xc8 is
Fischer's analysis, and White has full compen-
sation for the material; after 15...♜xg1 16
♜a6! White plays against the knight on a5)
14 ♜xc8 ♞xc8 15 ♞h3 ♞g5 16 c3 ♜h4 17
b4 ♞xh3 18 gxh3 ♜xh3 19 bxc5 ♞g8 20
♞g1 ♞xg1+ 21 ♜xg1 ♜f3+ with perpetual
check in Neumarker-Scheffer, corr. 1984.

b) 10 ♞c3 ♜d4 11 d3 0-0 12 0-0 ♜h4 13
♜h1 ♜xh3 14 gxh3 ♜xf2 and according to
Gligoric the position is unclear. Taking on h3
is solely justified by winning the f2 instead of
the h3-pawn. Still White might have the bet-
ter chances here.

c) 10 c3 ♜xh3 11 gxh3 ♞e4 12 0-0! (not
12 ♜a4? ♜xf2+ 13 ♜d1 ♜d5 and Black is
much better) 12...♜b6 13 b4 ♞b7 14 ♜f3
♜d3 15 ♜xc4 ♜xc4 16 ♜g4 ♜xg4+ 17 hxg4
h5 18 g5 0-0-0 gives Black excellent compen-
sation in a complicated queenless middle-
game.

10...♠d5

An interesting alternative was 10...g5! with the idea of 11 ♠c3 g4! 12 ♠g1 ♠b8 and Black has good counterplay. In fact this is the same position that arises after 9...g5 10 d3 g4 11 ♠g1 ♠c5 12 ♠c3 ♠b8.

11 ♠c3

If 11 0-0 0-0 (not 11...♠h4?! 12 ♠e1 ♠b7 13 ♠f3 ♠xh3 14 gxf3 ♠f6 15 ♠e2 ♠d6 16 ♠e1 0-0 17 ♠c3 ♠xc3 18 bxc3 or 11...♠xh3?! 12 gxf3 ♠h4 13 ♠f3 ♠xh3 14 ♠g2 ♠e6 15 ♠e1 White is better) 12 c4 ♠c7 13 ♠h1 ♠xh3 14 gxf3 ♠e6 15 ♠e3 (Veinger-Rytov, USSR 1972) and now not 15...♠d4 (as played by Rytov) as 16 ♠c3 gives White the slightly better game, but 15...♠b8! 16 ♠d2 ♠d4 with excellent play.

11...0-0

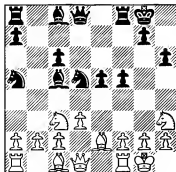
Black can also play 11...♠b7 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♠h1 g5! 14 ♠f3 f5 with good play, or 11...♠b8 12 0-0 g5! with an unclear game.

12 0-0

This position is very similar to that after 9...♠d6, the only difference being that here the bishop is on c5.

12...f5

A very natural move indeed. If instead 12...♠xc3?! 13 bxc3 ♠h4 14 ♠f3! (here 14 ♠h1?! does not work since because the f2-pawn is weak, i.e. 14...♠xh3 15 gxf3 ♠xf2) 14...♠xh3 15 gxf3 ♠xh3 16 ♠g2 and White stands better.



13 ♠d2

Perhaps preferable was 13 ♠xd5 cxd5 14 c3 ♠c6 15 d4 exd4 16 ♠f4 and White is slightly better according to Mikhalchishin.

13...♠b7 14 ♠h1 g5!

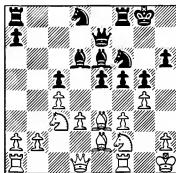
Black prevents f2-f4 and retains his space advantage.

15 ♠a4

Black is much better after 15 ♠xd5?! cxd5 16 c3 ♠b6 when the black pawns look very impressive.

15...♠d6 16 f3 ♠e6 17 ♠f2 ♠e7 18 c4 ♠f6 19 ♠e3 c5 20 ♠c3 ♠d8!

Heading for d4.

21 g4!

Just in time! Now White gets control over e4.

21...♠c6 22 gxf5 ♠xf5 23 ♠fe4 ♠d4 24 ♠xf6+

24 h4? looks tempting, but after 26...♠xe4 25 fxe4 ♠e6 26 ♠g2 ♠ab8 27 b3 gxf4 White has problems.

24...♠xf6 25 ♠e4 ♠g6 26 ♠d2 ♠e7 27 ♠g1 ♠h8 ½-½

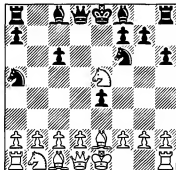
The position is about even: the black knight on d4 is as valuable as the white one on e4. Nevertheless both players should be ashamed for not playing on.

Game 20
Ciocaltea-Nezhmetdinov
Bucharest 1954

The following game does not have great

theoretical value. It is, however, very instructive. When I teach my pupils and present them with a position, they often ask me where is compensation for the pawns? I show this game and the questions are answered.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5
d5 5 exd5 ♘a5 6 ♚b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♚e2 h6 9 ♘f3 e4 10 ♘e5



Now Black has three good moves: 10...♙c7 (the current game), 10...♙c5 (Game 21) and 10...♙d6 (Games 22-24) – and one not so good: 10...♙d4! when after 11 f4! ♙c5 12 ♙f1 White is better in all lines, e.g. 12...♙d6 (if 12...♙d8 13 c3! ♘d5 14 ♙a4 ♙h4+ 15 ♘d1 0-0 16 ♙xc4 ♙d8 17 d4, or 12...♙b6 13 c3 ♙d6 14 b4 ♘b7 15 ♘a3 0-0 16 ♘ac4 ♙c7 17 a4, or 12...g5 13 c3 ♙d6 14 d4) 13 c3 ♙b6 14 ♙a4 0-0 15 b4 ♘b7 16 ♙xc6 ♙d8 17 ♘a3 a5 18 b5 ♙e8 19 ♘ac4 ♙c5 20 ♙a3 ♙c6 21 ♙xc5 ♙xc6 22 ♘xc6 ♙e8 23 ♙d4 and White was clearly better in Kuperman-Van Oosterom, corr. 1985.

10...♙c7!?

With normal play this move should transpose into 10...♙c5 or 10...♙d6 lines. Here 11 d4 exd3 12 ♘xd3 ♙d6 is Games 23 & 24, while 11 f4 exf3 12 ♘xf3 ♙d6 is covered in Game 22.

After 11 f4 Black can also play 11...♙c5 when 12 c3 ♙d6 (or 12...♘b7) is Game 21. Note that here 12 d4! exd3 13 cxd3 (if 13 ♘xd3? ♙b6 14 b3 0-0 15 ♙b2 ♘d5 and

Black is much better) 13...0-0 14 ♘c3 ♙b8 15 ♙c2 ♙e8 gives Black excellent play for the pawn.

11 ♘g4?

An instructive mistake.

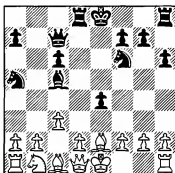
11...♙xg4!

Time is more important than the relative values of bishop or knight in this position.

12 ♙xg4 ♙c5 13 ♙e2

White also has problems after 13 0-0 h5 14 ♙c2 ♘g4 15 g3 ♘h2! (weaker is 15...♘xf2? 16 ♙xf2 h4 17 d4 exd3 18 ♙xd3 ♙b6 19 ♙f5! ♙xf2+ 20 ♙xf2 hxg3 21 ♙xb6 gxh2+ 22 ♘h1 axb6 23 ♙f4 with unclear play) 16 ♘h2 h4 17 ♘g2 ♙xf2 18 ♙xf2 hxg3 19 ♙g1 gxh2 20 ♘xf2 ♙f4+ 21 ♘e1 ♙h2 22 ♘d1 ♙h4 23 ♙f1 ♘c4 and Black has an winning attack.

13...♙d8 14 c3



14...♘b7!

This example is worth remembering. Black improves the position of his worst placed piece.

15 0-0 h5!

Targeting the kingside dark squares.

16 d4

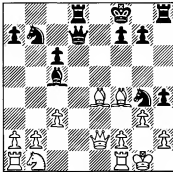
This does not look good, but it is hard to find a good alternative; e.g. if 16 b4 ♙b6 17 ♙c1 ♘f8! followed by ♘g4 and the black attack is probably decisive.

16...exd3 17 ♙xd3 ♘g4 18 ♙e2+ ♘f8!

There is no need to worsen the black bishop's position. After 18...♙e7? 19 g3 the

position would be less clear.

19 g3 ♖d7 20 ♗e4 h4 21 ♗f4



21...♗xh2!

Simple, but nice.

22 ♗e1

If 22 ♗xh2 hxg3+ 23 ♗g1 ♖h3 and mate is coming.

22...♗g4 23 ♗f3 ♗xf2 24 ♗e3 hxg3 25 ♗xc5+ ♗xc5 26 ♗xc6 ♗h3+ 27 ♗f1 ♖f5+ 0-1

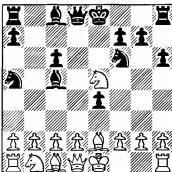
28 ♖f3 ♗f4 29 ♖xg3 ♗fd3+ 30 ♖f3 ♗h1+ 31 ♗g2 ♗xe1+ is terminal.

Game 21

Groszpetter-Hazai

Hungary 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♗c4 ♗f6 4 ♗g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♗b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 8 ♗e2 h6 9 ♗f3 e4 10 ♗e5 ♗c5!?



This move is underestimated by theory.

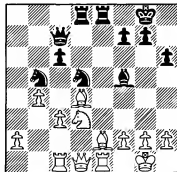
11 e3

The best reply, preparing d2-d4 or b2-b4. If 11 f4 ♖b6 12 ♗f1 ♗g1!, or 11 0-0! ♖d6! (not 11...♖d4? 12 ♗g4 ♗xg4 13 ♗xg4 e3 14 ♗f3! exf2+ 15 ♗h1 and White is better) 12 ♗g4 ♗xg4 13 ♗xg4 h5 14 ♗e2 ♗g4 and the black attack is mortally dangerous.

11...♗d6

Black has also tried 11...♖c7 (11...0-0? is possible too) and now:

a) 12 d4?! exd3 13 ♗xd3 ♗d6 seems to give Black excellent compensation. Compared with 10...♗d6 11 d4 exd3 12 ♗xd3 ♖c7 (Games 23 & 24), the additional c2-c3 does not improve White's position. For example: 14 ♗d2 ♗f5 15 b4 ♗b7 16 ♗c4 ♗d8 (also interesting was 16...♗xh2! since if 17 g3?! ♗xg3 18 fxg3 ♖xg3+ 19 ♗d2 0-0-0 with a crushing attack, while after 17 ♗e3 ♗e6 18 ♗d2 the game is unclear) 17 ♗c3 0-0! 18 ♗xa7?! (18 h3, preparing to castle short, looked much better) 18...♗d5 19 ♗d4 ♗fe8 20 ♗xd6 ♗xd6 21 0-0 (at first sight it might seem that White is winning, but this is an illusion – actually he is under great pressure) 21...♗b5! 22 ♗c1



22...♗bxc3! 23 ♗xc3? (the sad alternative was 23 ♗xc3 ♗f4 24 ♗e1 ♗xd3 25 ♗f3 ♗e2 26 ♖c2 ♗xf3 27 gxf3 c5! and Black is better) 23...♗xc3 24 ♗xc3 ♗xc2 25 ♖xc2 ♗xd3 26 ♖g4 f5 27 ♖h4 ♗xf1 28 ♗xf1 ♖d7 29 f3 ♖d3+ 30 ♗f2 ♗a8 and White

resigned in Sutovsky-Postny, Tel Aviv 2001.

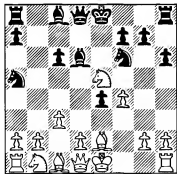
b) 12 f4 ♖b7 (12...♗d6 transposes to the game) and then:

b1) 13 d4?! exd3 14 ♖xd3 0-0 15 ♖d2 ♖d6 16 ♗f3 ♗f5 17 ♖e2 ♖d5 and Black is much better.

b2) 13 ♖a4 ♗d7 14 ♖a3 0-0 15 b4 ♗b6 16 ♖ac4 ♖d6 17 ♖c3 (or 17 ♖xb6 axb6 18 ♖b3 ♗e6 19 ♖b1 b5 with compensation) 17...a5 18 ♖c2 ♖d5 and Black had full compensation for the pawn in Estrin-Dannberg, corr. 1965.

b3) 13 b4 ♗b6 (after 13...♗d6 14 d4 exd3 15 ♖xd3 0-0 16 0-0 a5 17 ♗f3 ♗xe5 18 fxe5 ♖xe5 19 ♗xc6 axb4 20 ♖b5 ♖xb5 21 ♗xb5 the position was equal in Mednis-Spassky, Antwerp 1955) 14 a4 a5 15 b5 0-0 16 bxc6 ♖c5 17 ♖a3 ♖d5 18 g3 ♗h3 and Black had a strong initiative in Jovic-Bohak, corr. 1972. The game continued 19 ♗f1 f6 20 ♖b5 ♖e8 21 ♖d7 ♖d3+ 22 ♗xd3 exd3 23 ♖xb6 ♖xc6! and White was in difficulties, since if 24 ♖xa8? ♗e8+ 25 ♖f2 ♖xc3! leads to mate.

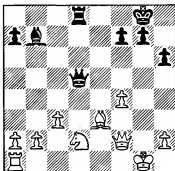
12 f4



12...♖c7

Here 12...0-0! looks better, e.g. 13 0-0 c5 (13...♖c7 returns to the game) 14 d4 exd3 (14...cxd4 15 cxd4 ♗e8 16 ♖c3 ♖b6 is an alternative) 15 ♖xd3 ♗b7 16 ♗d1 ♖c4 (or 16...♗c7!?) 17 ♖d2 and now 17...♖xd2 18 ♗xd2 ♖b6 19 ♗e3 ♗ad8 with compensation. Instead Chandler-Hebden, England

1996, saw 17...c4! which is impressive, but not correct. Nevertheless, modern chess is much more than just mathematics and pattern recognition. It is also a psychological fight. To play the attack some material down is easier in practical terms than defending, and so such risk taking can be justified. The game continued 18 ♖dxc4 ♖xc4 19 ♖xc4 ♖h4 20 g3 ♗c5+ 21 ♗e3 ♖xg3 22 ♗xc5 ♖xe2+ 23 ♖xc2 ♗fe8 24 ♖f2 ♖h5 25 ♗e3 ♗ad8 26 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 27 ♖d2 ♖d5



28 ♖f3?? (A horrible move; instead after 28 ♖f1! Black's attack does not compensate for the sacrificed material, e.g. 28...♗d6 29 c4 ♖h1+ 30 ♖g1 ♖c6 31 f5 ♗f6 32 ♖e2 and White should win) 28...♗d6 (White was probably hoping Black would be satisfied with regaining some material) 29 ♗f1 ♗g6+ 30 ♖h1 ♖h5! (White has no real defence against the primitive ...♖h3 and ...♗g3) 31 ♗xa7? (but if 31 f5 ♖xf5 32 ♗d4 ♖h3 33 ♗e5 ♗g5 34 ♗f4 ♗f5 35 ♖g2 ♖xg2+ 36 ♖xg2 ♗xf4 and the endgame is clearly better for Black) 31...♖h3 32 ♖e2 ♗g3 0-1.

13 0-0 0-0 14 d4 exd3 15 ♗xd3

If 15 ♖xd3 ♗d8 16 ♖c2 ♖d5 17 b4 ♖b7 (Skrobek-Sydor, Lodz 1980) 18 ♗f3 ♗e6 and Black has enough compensation for the pawn.

15...♗d8 16 ♖e2 ♗e8 17 b4 ♖b7 18 ♖a3 ♗g4

Or 18...a5 19 ♖ac4 axb4 20 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 21 cxb4 ♖xb4 22 ♗b2 and White is slightly

better because of the powerful dark-squared bishop.

19 ♖f2 ♗xe5 20 fxe5 ♖xe5 21 ♖b2 ½-½

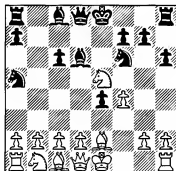
The game was agreed drawn, though White is slightly better after 21...♖c7 22 ♗ac1.

Game 22
Vukceвич-Romanishin
Hastings 1976/77

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♖b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 8 ♗e2 h6 9 ♖f3 e4 10 ♖e5 ♗d6

The most popular move.

11 f4



After this Black has no problems at all, although 30 years ago Estrin was convinced that this was the best solution. The usual 11 d4 is covered in Games 23 & 24.

Weak is 11 ♖g4? ♗xg4! (better than 11...♖xg4 12 ♗xg4 ♖h4 13 ♗xc8 ♗xc8 14 h3 0-0 15 ♖g4 ♖c7 16 ♖c3 f5 though Black still has compensation) 12 ♗xg4 ♖c7 13 ♗h3 0-0 14 g3 ♖d5 15 0-0 ♗ac8 and Black is much better.

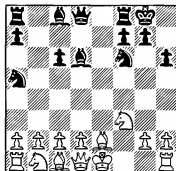
11...exf3

The best response. After 11...♖c7 12 0-0 White has some chances of gaining an advantage, though Black will still have compensation; e.g. 12...0-0 13 ♖c3 ♗f5 14 a3 (or 14 d4 exd3 15 ♗xd3 ♗xd3 16 ♖xd3 ♗fe8 17 ♗c3

♗ad8) 14...♖d5 15 b4 ♖b7 16 ♖b2 (16 ♖xd5 cxd5 17 d4 f6 18 c4 fxe5 19 dxe5 dxc4 20 exd6 ♖xd6 21 ♖d5+ ♖h8 22 ♗b2 is met by 22...c3! 23 ♗xc3 ♖xc3 24 ♖xd6 ♖c3+ 25 ♗f2 ♗ac8 with fine compensation) 16...♗ac8 17 g3 a5 18 ♖c4 axb4 19 ♖xd5 cxd5 20 ♖xd6 ♖b6+ 21 ♖g2 ♖xd6 22 axb4 ♖c4 with sufficient compensation in Timman-Gligoric, Bad Lauterberg 1977.

12 ♖xf3 0-0

Black should develop first, then attack. The wild 12...♖g4? 13 0-0 ♖c7 14 h3 ♗h2+ 15 ♖h1 h5 does not really threaten anything, and after 16 d4 ♗g3 17 ♗d3 ♗e6 18 ♖e2 0-0-0 19 c4 White is much better. Black can also play 12...♖c7 first, transposing below after 13 0-0 0-0.



13 d4

13 0-0 will transpose to the next note if White follows with 14 d4. Otherwise:

a) 13...♖c7 14 b3?! (14 d4) 14...♗e8 15 ♖b2? ♖g4 16 h3 ♗c5+ 17 d4 ♖e3 and Black was much better in Djordjevic-Truta, corr. 1980.

b) 13...c5!? 14 b3 (14 d4) 14...♖b7 15 ♖b2 ♗e8 16 ♖a3 ♗c7 17 ♖c4 ♖c6 gives Black good compensation for the pawn.

13...♗e8

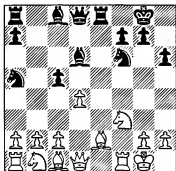
Also interesting are:

a) 13...♖c7!? 14 0-0 c5 15 ♖c3 a6 16 d5 ♗e8! (better than 16...♖b7 which blocks the escape route of the knight on a5 and closes the half open b-file; even so after 17 ♖h1

♖fe8 18 ♖h4 ♜c5 Black is fine) 17 ♖h1 ♜b8 18 a3 ♗g4 19 h3 ♗e3 20 ♙xc3 ♙xc3 21 ♜b1 ♖e7 and Black had great compensation in Estrin-Levenfish, USSR 1949.

b) 13...c5!? 14 0-0 (after 14 dxc5?! ♙xc5 15 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 White has some problems with his king) 14...cxd4 15 ♖h1 ♜c5 16 c3 dxc3 17 ♗xc3 with equality. Black's activity will give him a draw, but probably nothing more.

14 0-0 c5



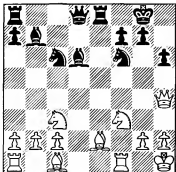
15 ♖h1

White cannot open the game. If 15 dxc5? ♙xc5+ 16 ♖h1 ♜xd1 17 ♙xd1 ♙a6 18 ♜e1 ♗e4 and Black wins.

15...♙b7 16 ♗c3

Or 16 ♙b5 ♜e7 17 ♗c3 ♗c6 18 dxc5 ♙xc5 19 ♙f4 ♜b6 with compensation.

16...cxd4 17 ♜xd4 ♗c6 18 ♖h4



18...♗e5

This looks natural, but the white queen really has plenty of squares. Better was 18...♗b4! 19 ♗e1 ♗e4 and then if 20 ♖h5? g6! (not 20...♗f6? 21 ♖f5 ♗bd5 22 ♙f3 and White keeps the extra pawn with a good position) 21 ♖xh6 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♜xe2 23 ♙g5 ♙f8 24 ♖h4 ♗d5 25 ♙f6 ♙g7 26 ♙xg7 ♖xg7 27 cxb4 ♜xe1! and Black wins, while if 20 ♖g4! ♜e6 21 a3 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♗d5 with excellent play for the pawn.

19 ♙d2 ♗g6

Not 19...♗fg4?! 20 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 21 ♜ad1 ♗g6 22 ♙b5 and White is better.

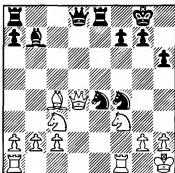
20 ♖d4 ♗e4?

Black is on the wrong track here. Both alternatives looked better:

a) 20...♙c7!? 21 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 22 ♜ad1 ♗g4 with some compensation.

b) 20...♙xh2!? 21 ♜xd8! (if 21 ♙xh6?! ♜xd4 22 ♗xd4 ♙e5 23 ♙e3 ♗e4 with a dangerous initiative for Black, or 21 ♖xh2?! ♙xf3 22 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 23 ♙d3 ♙e4 and Black is slightly better) 21...♜xd8 22 ♙xh6 ♙d6 23 ♙g5 ♗h5 24 ♙xd8 ♗g3+ 25 ♖g1 ♙c5+ 26 ♖h2 ♗xf1+ 27 ♜xf1 ♜xd8 with compensation for the pawn.

21 ♙c4 ♙f4 22 ♙xf4 ♗xf4



Black has some compensation which, after a hard defence, should be enough for draw, but nothing more.

23 ♜ad1 ♜xd4 24 ♜xd4 ♜ad8 25 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 26 ♗xe4 ♙xe4 27 ♖g1 g5 ½-½

Black should have to fight for a draw here,

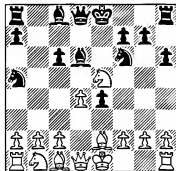
but White assisted him by simply offering it to him. Naturally Black accepted. Offering the draw was White's worst move in the game! Instead, after 28 c3! Black has no good moves, e.g. 28...♗xg2 29 ♖xf7+! ♗g7 30 ♗xg2 ♗xf7 31 ♗f2 or 28...♗xf3 29 ♖xf3 ♖d1+ 30 ♖f1 or 28...♗g7 29 ♖d4 and White is clearly better.

Game 23

L. Belov-Nezhmetdinov

Omsk 1961

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5
d5 5 exd5 ♖a5 6 ♖b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6
8 ♖e2 h6 9 ♖f3 e4 10 ♖e5 ♖d6 11 d4



In recent years this has been the most popular move, and it also looks the soundest, so probably 11 d4 will continue to be the main line for some time to come.

11...exd3

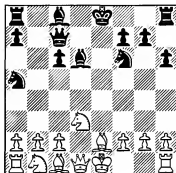
The best solution. The knight on e5 is disturbing Black's game too much. Also, Black has a lead in development and should therefore open the position when he has the chance.

11...♖c7?! is too slow. After 12 ♖d2 ♖b7 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♖a3 ♖e6 15 ♖c1 ♖fd8 16 ♖ac4 ♖xc4 17 ♖xc4 ♖xe5 18 dxe5 ♖xe5 19 ♖f4 White was much better in Bogoljubow-Zimmermann, Zürich 1928.

11...c5!? (Nenashev's recommendation) could be another way to attack the white

centre, e.g. 12 c3 (if 12 ♖b5+ ♗e7! 13 ♖c3 ♖b6 14 dxc5 ♖xc5 15 ♖e2 ♖d8 gives Black fine compensation, but not 12...♗f8? 13 dxc5 and White wins) 12...0-0 13 0-0 ♖c7 14 f4 ♖b8 with compensation for the pawn. Still, the main line seems to be more natural.

12 ♖xd3 ♖c7



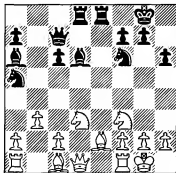
13 ♖d2

Here White has tried a wide range of moves:

- 13 b3 is covered in Game 24.
- 13 ♖d2! 0-0 14 ♖xa5 ♖xa5+ 15 ♖d2 ♖c7 16 ♖c3 ♖b8 17 h3 c5 with strong compensation in Niemi-Tuomala, Finland 1996.
- 13 f4? is just a weak move, and Black stands better after 13...0-0 14 0-0 ♖f5 15 ♖c3 ♖ad8 16 ♖e1 ♖fe8.
- 13 ♖e3?! c5 14 ♖c3 ♖c4 15 ♖c1 0-0 16 ♖f4 ♖xf4 17 ♖xf4 ♖xb2 also leaves Black with a better game.
- 13 b4?! is not prudent. After 13...♖c4 14 ♖d2 ♖e5! (better than 14...♖xd2 15 ♖xd2 0-0 16 h3 ♖f5 17 0-0 a draw was agreed in Mikhailchishin-Geller, Dortmund 1991) 15 a3 ♖xd3+ 16 ♖xd3 0-0 17 ♖b2 ♖c8+ Black has a strong initiative.

f) 13 h3!? is interesting; White prepares to castle as soon as possible. Nevertheless, after 13...0-0 14 0-0 ♖f5 15 ♖d2 ♖ad8 16 ♖e1 ♖d5 17 ♖f1 c5 Black had the usual compensation in Kholmov-Geller, Elista 1995.

13...♖a6 14 ♖f3 0-0 15 0-0 ♖ad8 16 b3 ♖fe8



Black is now fully developed and will immediately start to attack the white position. White is not ready for this, but if he develops, he might ride out the storm. This does not happen in the game!

17 $\text{e}1?$

This weakens the dark squares around the white king, something Black immediately exploits. Better was 17 $\text{b}2$ $\text{c}4$ 18 $\text{c}4$.

17... $\text{d}4$ 18 $\text{h}3$

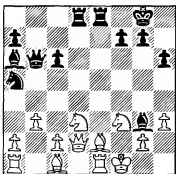
If 18 $\text{g}3$ $\text{c}5$ 19 $\text{f}1$ $\text{d}1$ $\text{f}2!$ 20 $\text{f}2$ $\text{b}6$ and White loses material.

18... $\text{d}1$ $\text{f}2!$ 19 $\text{c}1$ $\text{f}2$

Forced, since if 19 $\text{d}1$ $\text{f}2$ $\text{h}2+$ and the queen is lost.

19... $\text{b}6+$ 20 $\text{c}1$ $\text{g}3$ 21 $\text{d}2$

Otherwise something would take on $\text{d}3$.



21... $\text{c}5!!$

The brilliant point of the combination! This superb move has but one idea: to rein-

roduce the knight on $\text{a}5$ to the game. White cannot survive against this attack.

22 $\text{c}4$ $\text{e}1$ 23 $\text{c}1$ $\text{d}1$ $\text{c}4!$

Black is unstoppable.

24 $\text{b}1$ $\text{c}4$ 25 $\text{f}2$

If 25 $\text{c}1$ $\text{e}2$ 26 $\text{c}2$ $\text{d}3$ 27 $\text{d}3$ $\text{d}3+$ 28 $\text{d}3$ $\text{f}6$ 29 $\text{b}1$ $\text{f}5+$ and 30... $\text{b}1$, or 25 $\text{d}1$ $\text{a}6$ 26 $\text{d}1$ $\text{d}3$ 27 $\text{d}3$ (or 27 $\text{d}3$) 27... $\text{c}4$ and Black wins.

25... $\text{d}3$ 26 $\text{d}3$ $\text{c}4+$ 27 $\text{g}3$ $\text{d}3$ 28 $\text{b}2$

Against the two rooks White is helpless.

28... $\text{g}6+$

Or 28... $\text{f}3?$ 29 $\text{g}3$ (29 $\text{c}3$ $\text{c}3+$ wins the queen) 29... $\text{g}1$ 30 $\text{g}2$ $\text{c}1$ 31 $\text{f}2$ $\text{e}5+$ picks up the rook on $\text{a}1$.

29 $\text{f}2$ $\text{e}4$ 30 $\text{d}2$ $\text{f}3!$ 31 $\text{g}3$ $\text{h}4+$ 0-1

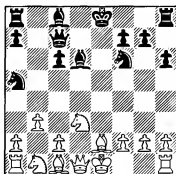
After 32 $\text{c}1$ $\text{h}3+$ 33 $\text{d}2$ $\text{h}2+$ 34 $\text{c}1$ $\text{e}2$ wins.

Game 24

Morozevich-Onischuk

Moscow 1996

1 $\text{e}4$ $\text{e}5$ 2 $\text{d}3$ $\text{c}6$ 3 $\text{c}4$ $\text{d}6$ 4 $\text{d}5$ 5 $\text{d}5$ $\text{a}5$ 6 $\text{b}5+$ $\text{c}6$ 7 $\text{d}6$ $\text{b}1$ 8 $\text{e}2$ $\text{h}6$ 9 $\text{d}3$ $\text{e}4$ 10 $\text{e}5$ $\text{d}6$ 11 $\text{d}4$ $\text{e}3$ 12 $\text{d}3$ $\text{c}7$ 13 $\text{b}3$



The main line. This move has two ideas. It allows the fianchetto development of the bishop, and takes control of the $\text{c}4$ -square.

13...0-0

This is the most natural reply. However, 13...c5!? has also been investigated:

a) 14 ♖a3 ♜b8! 15 ♙f3? (15 c4 is unclear) 15...0-0 16 c4 ♙f5 17 ♘b5 ♜xb5! 18 cxb5 c4 19 bxc4 ♜d8 and Black's was crushing in Fritz-Malinin, corr. 1989.

b) 14 c4 0-0 (White is better after 14...♖c6!? 15 ♖c3 a6 16 ♙e3, or 14...♙b7?! 15 ♖c3 ♙xg2 16 ♖b5 ♜e7 17 ♙g1 and White has the initiative according to Blatny) 15 ♙b2 ♖e4 16 ♖c3 ♖xc3 17 ♙xc3 ♜e8 18 h3 ♙f5 19 0-0 ♜ad8 with excellent compensation for the pawn.

c) 14 ♙b2 c4 15 bxc4 ♖xc4 16 ♙xf6 gxf6 17 0-0!? is an idea of Sutovsky, and then 17...♙xh2+ 18 ♖h1 ♙e6 19 ♖c3 ♜d8 (or 19...♖a3!? 20 ♖e4 f5 21 ♖f6+ ♖e7 with an unclear position) 20 ♜e1 ♙e5?! (better is 20...♖a3 since if 21 g3? ♖xc2 22 ♜d2 ♖xa1 23 ♖xh2 h5 gives Black a strong attack) 21 f4 ♙xc3 22 ♜xc3 ♜g8 23 ♙f3 f5 24 ♜fe1 ♜c8 25 ♙d5 ♖b6 26 ♜xc7 ♜xc7 27 ♙xe6 fxe6 28 ♜xe6+ ♖d8 29 ♙d1 and White won in Sutovsky-Acs, Tel Aviv 2001.

14 ♙b2 ♖e4

Black has the following alternatives:

a) 14...♙e8 15 h3 ♖e4 16 0-0 ♜c7 17 ♖c3 ♖xc3 18 ♙xc3 was tried in Kasparov-Timman, Moscow 1994, and now after the strongest 18...♖xb3 19 cxb3 ♜xc2 20 ♜c1 ♜xd1 21 ♜axd1 White is slightly better.

b) 14...♖d5!? 15 ♖c3 ♖f4 and now:

b1) 16 0-0?! (Tal thought this should give White better play, but...) 16...♖xc2+ 17 ♖xe2! (or 17 ♜xc2 ♙xh2+ 18 ♖h1 ♙d6 and the position is unclear) 17...♙xh2+ 18 ♖h1 ♙d6 19 ♖d4 ♜b8 20 c4 ♙e7! 21 ♜h5 ♙f6 and Black is very close to equality.

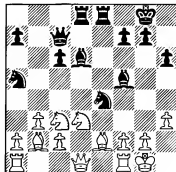
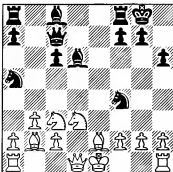
b2) 16 ♖xf4 ♙xf4 17 h3 (after 17 g3 ♜d8 18 ♙d3 ♜e8+ 19 ♖c2 ♙g5 20 h4 ♙e7 21 ♜d2 c5 and Black has sufficient compensation according to Tal) 17...♜b8! (if 17...♜d8 18 ♙d3 c5 19 0-0 c4 20 ♖b5 ♜c6 21 bxc4 ♖xc4 22 ♙e4 and White is better according to Pálkövi; 20...♜b7! is a possible improvement with an unclear position, but still, 17...♜b8 looks stronger) 18 ♜d4 c5 and Black has great compensation; e.g. 19 ♜c4 ♜b4 20 ♜f3 ♙b7 21 ♖d5 ♙xd5 22 ♜xd5 ♜e8 and White is in trouble.

15 ♖c3

If 15 ♖d2 f5!? with unclear play.

15...♙f5!

This move seems natural, but now White can seriously consider exchanging on e4, opening up the game for his bishops. Better was 15...f5 16 h3 (if 16 f3?! ♖c5 17 ♜d2 ♜d8 or 16 f4 ♙a6 17 0-0 ♜ad8 with compensation) 16...♙a6 (or 16...♙b7!? 17 0-0 ♜ad8 18 ♜e1 ♜fe8 with good compensation) 17 0-0 ♜ad8 18 ♜e1 c5 was Morozevich-Nenashev, Alusta 1994, and now after 19 ♖h1 ♙b7 20 ♙f3 the game is unclear according to Morozevich.

16 h3 ♜ad8 17 0-0 ♜fe8

18 ♖f3?

Better was 18 ♖xc4! ♜xc4 19 ♖f3 ♜c6 (or 19...♞e8 20 ♜c1 and White is much better here too) 20 ♖g4 ♖xg4 21 ♜xg4 and White was clearly better in Howell-Pein, Wrexham 1995.

18...♖g5 19 ♖g4 ♖g6 20 ♖h1 ♜b7?

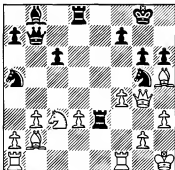
A very slow move, indicating ...♖a5-c4, but not really doing much else. Stronger was 20...♖b4! and Black still has compensation for the pawn.

21 f4

White is clearly better.

21...♖b8 22 ♖h5 ♖xd3 23 cxd3 ♜e3

After 23...♖e6 24 ♜g4 ♖d4 25 ♖c4 wins. Now Black hopes for 24 fxxg5? ♜c7!, but...

24 ♜g4! g6

Again if 24...♖e6 25 ♖c4 ♖d4 26 ♖xd4 ♜xd4 27 ♖g3! and White wins; the threat of ♖f5 is too strong.

25 ♖xg6!

White shows no restraint, but simply hacks his way through to the black king.

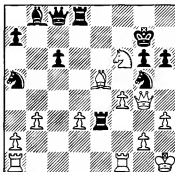
25...fxg6 26 ♖e4!

Now all the remaining white pieces will

enter the attack (bar the rook on a1).

26...♜c7

If 26...♖xc4 27 ♜xg6+ ♖f8 28 dxc4 ♜f7 29 ♜xh6+ ♖e8 30 ♜h8+ ♜f8 31 ♜h5+ ♜f7 32 ♜xa5 and wins.

27 ♖e5 ♜c8 28 ♖f6+ ♖g7**29 ♜xc8**

Simplest, even for a grandmaster. When an excellent GM like Morozevich sees a winning endgame he will often play it immediately. However, stronger was 29 ♖b2! ♖xh3 30 ♖d5+ ♖e5 (30...♖f8 31 ♖xe3) 31 fxe5!! ♜xg4 32 e6+ with a nice mate after 32...♖h- 33 ♜f7+ ♖g8 34 ♖e7.

29...♜xc8 30 ♖xb8 ♜xb8 31 fxg5 hxg5 32 ♖g4 ♜xd3 33 ♜ae1 ♜b7

Black is lost because of his weak pawns, weak knight and weak king.

34 ♜e8 ♜d5

Black cannot save the game with 34...♜d2 due to 35 ♜ff8 ♜xa2 36 ♜g8+ ♖h7 (or 36...♖f7 37 ♖e5+) 37 ♖f6+ ♖h6 38 ♜e6! and White wins.

35 ♜ff8 c5 36 ♜c8 ♜e7 37 ♜g8+ ♖f7 38 ♜cf8+ 1-0

Summary

Against Steinitz' $9 \text{d}h3$ the latest edition of *ECO* recommends $9... \text{d}d6$ and $9... \text{d}c5$ as the best moves, but it appears that Black will find his best chances with $9...g5!$ as in Game 17. After this move White does not appear to have any chance of obtaining an advantage.

In the main line $9 \text{d}f3$ $\text{e}4$ $10 \text{d}c5$ Black can hope for good counterplay with all three standard moves: $10... \text{w}c7$, $10... \text{d}c5$ and $10... \text{d}d6$. The usual sequence these days is $10... \text{d}d6$ $11 \text{d}4$ exd3 $12 \text{d}xd3$ $\text{w}c7$ $13 \text{b}3$, which offers a complicated and dynamic middlegame in which where Black has compensation for his pawn, but probably no more than that.

1 e4 e5 2 d f3 d c6 3 d c4 d f6 4 d g5 d5 5 exd5 d a5 6 d b5+ c6 7 dxc6 bxc6 8 d e2 h6 9 d f3

$9 \text{d}h3$ (D)

$9... \text{d}e7$ – Game 16

$9...g5$ – Game 17

$9... \text{d}d6$ – Game 18

$9... \text{d}c5$ – Game 19

9...e4 10 d e5 (D) $\text{d}d6$

$10... \text{w}c7$ – Game 20

$10... \text{d}c5$ – Game 21

11 d4

$11 \text{f}4$ – Game 22

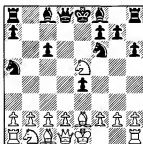
11...exd3 12 dxd3 w c7 (D)

$13 \text{d}d2$ – Game 23

$13 \text{b}3$ – Game 24



$9 \text{d}h3$



$10 \text{d}e5$



$12... \text{w}c7$

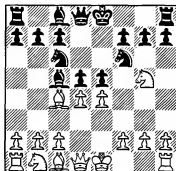
CHAPTER FIVE

Traxler Gambit: 4 Ng5 Bc5! ?



1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 Ng5 Bc5! ?

This enterprising sacrifice, offering a rook, was first played by the Czech player K.Traxler in the 1890's. Over a century later not much has changed. If you want to play 4... Bc5 as Black you must be good at tactics and have a good memory. White has three serious moves at his disposal here: 5 d4, 5 Nxf7 and 5 Nxf7+ . Only the last move gives White a real chance for an advantage.



Game 25
Grott-Leisebein
Correspondence 1998

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 Ng5 Bc5! ? 5 d4

After this move White does not have an advantage. The pseudo-Ivans Gambit 5 b4? has also been seen, but Black has a strong counter-stroke in the form of 5...d5! 6 exd5?! (but if 6 bxc5 dxc4 7 c3 Bg4 8 f3 Nd4 and Black is much better) 6... Nxb4 7 d6 (not 7 0-0? Bg4 and wins) 7... Wxd6 8 Nxf7+ (if 8 Nxf7 Wd4 9 0-0 Bg4! 10 We1 Nxc2 and wins) 8... cf8 9 Bb3 (if 9 c3 Wc6) 9... Wd4 10 We2 Wxa1 11 Wc4 Nxf2+! and Black wins.

5...d5!

5... exd4 ? loses to 6 Nxf7 We7 7 Nhx8 , but Black can also try 5... Nxd4 6 Nxf7 (if 6 Nxf7+ ce7 7 c4 ff8 8 c3 h6 9 f3 d6 with good play for Black in Gofstein-Nakonechny, USSR 1961) 6... We7 7 Nhx8 d5 8 c3!? (if (8 c2 dxe4 9 c3 Bf5 10 c3 0-0-0 11 cxd4 exd4 12 Bg5 Bb4+ , Mednis-Santasiere, USA 1955, and according to ECO the position is unclear) 8...dxc4 9 exd4 Nxd4 10 Nd2 (if 10 c3 Bg4 11 f3 0-0-0 12 Wa4 Bc6 13 Ng6 hxc6 14 Bg5 Wc5) 10... Bg4 11 Wa4+ Bd7 12 Wxc4 0-0-0 13 f3 Bg4 14 c3 Nxc4 15 Nf7 c6 16 Wa4 Nxf7 17 Nxd4 exd4 18 0-0 Wc5 19 Bd1 c8 with good compensation for the exchange.

6 Nxd5! ?

If 6 exd5 Nxd4 7 c3 f5 8 0-0 Nd6 9

e b3 0-0 and Black is at least equal.

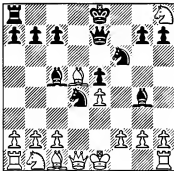
White's best continuation may be 6 dxc5 dxc4 7 Wxd8+ Qxd8 with a roughly equal ending. Then if 8 Qc3 h6 (probably best; if 8...Qe6?! 9 Qb5 Qxg5 10 Qxg5 and White was slightly better in Starostits-Trojacek, Trinec 1998, while after 8...0-0 9 Qf3 Qc6 10 Qg5 Qe8 11 0-0 f6 game is just equal) 9 Qb5 0-0! (9...Bb8 10 Qf3 Qc6 11 Qxc7+ Qd8 12 Qb5 Qxc4 13 Qc3 Qg4 14 0-0-0+ would leave White slightly better) 10 Qxc7 Bb8 11 Qf3 Qc6 with an even game, which is far from the same thing as a drawn.

6...Qxd4

Not 6...Qxd5? 7 dxc5 Qf6 8 Wxd8+ Qxd8 9 Qc3 h6 10 Qf3 Qc6 11 Qc3 Qg4 12 0-0 and White is much better.

7 Qxf7+

Risky is 7 Qxf7?! Qe7 8 Qxh8 Qg4 and now:



a) 9 Wd2 Qxd5 10 exd5 (if 10 c3 Qf6 11 cxd4 Qb4 12 Qc3 Qxc4 13 Wc2 Qxc3 and White is caught in one hell of a storm) 10...Qf5 11 0-0 Qxc2 12 g4 Wh4 13 Wg5 Wxg4+ 14 Wxg4 Qxg4 15 Qc3 Qxc3 16 fxc3 Qxa1 17 Qa3 Qe7 18 Bf7+ Qd6 19 Bxg7 Qe2 20 Qf7+ Qxd5 21 Bxh7 and Black is better because of his more active pieces.

b) 9 Qf7+? Qf8 10 f3 is the computer's favourite, but after 10...Qxc4 11 fxc4 Wh4+ 12 g3 Qxg3 13 Qg5 Wxg5 14 hxg3 We3+ 15 Qf1 Qf5! it finally understands that Black

wins.

c) 9 f3 is equally horrible. See for yourself: 9...Qxd5 10 fxc4 Qb4 11 Qa3 Wh4+ 12 g3 Wh3 13 c3 Wg2 0-1 Lichtenen-Ostroverchov, corr. 1968-69, since after 14 cxd4 Wxh1+ 15 Qd2 Wxe4 White will not survive the attack.

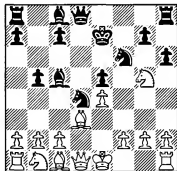
d) 9 Wd3 Qxd5 10 c3 Qb4 11 cxb4 Qxb4+ 12 Qc3 (if 12 Qd2 0-0-0! with a crushing attack) 12...Wd7 13 Qf1 Qxc3 14 f3 (not 14 bxc3?? Qc2+) 14...Qa5 15 fxc4 0-0-0 with excellent compensation for the material. White is really in danger here.

7...Qe7 8 Qc4

After 8 c3 h6 9 cxd4 Wxd4 10 Wxd4 Qxd4 11 Qb3 hxg5 Black was better in Gobza-Rohlichek, corr. 1956.

8...b5 9 Qd3 h6

Also interesting is 9...Bf8 10 Qe3 h6 11 Qf3 Qg4 12 Qbd2 Wd6 with compensation; for example if 13 h3 Qxf3+ 14 gxf3 Qe6! 15 We2 a6 and Black has excellent play and no need for the f-pawn anyway.



10 c3?

This weakens the central light squares, allows Black to open the h-file, and leaves the centre as a highway for Black. Much better was the simple 10 Qf3 Qg4 11 Qbd2 Wd6 12 0-0 Bh8 13 Qxd4 Qxd4 14 Qe2 Qd7 15 Qf3 Qc5 16 Wxd6+ cxd6! though Black has good compensation because of the c-file and a lead in development.

10...hxg5 11 cxd4 Wxd4

Now White has a serious problem: how will he complete his development?

12 ♖c2

If 12 ♖e2 ♗d8 13 ♙c2 ♙b4+ 14 ♘d2 ♙b7 15 f3 g4 and Black is much better.

12...♘g4

Black must do this right. After 12...♙b4+? 13 ♘c3 ♗d8 14 ♙xb5 ♖xe4+ 15 ♖xe4 ♘xe4 16 0-0 ♙xc3 17 ♙c6 ♗b8 18 bxc3 ♘f6 19 ♙xg5 White is much better.

13 ♙xg5+

After 13 ♘c3 ♖xf2+ 14 ♖xf2 ♘xf2 15 ♙xg5+ ♗c6 16 ♙xb5 ♘hx1 17 ♙c4+ ♗d7 18 0-0-0+ ♙d4 19 ♗xh1 ♙b7 White does not have enough for the exchange.

13...♗f7 14 ♙xb5

Not 14 0-0? ♗xh2 15 ♙c3 ♖d8! with the idea of ...♗h8 or ...♗h1+ with mate coming, or if 14 ♘c3 ♘xf2 15 ♗f1 ♗g6 16 ♗xf2 ♖xf2+ 17 ♖xf2 ♙xf2+ 18 ♗xf2 ♗xg5 and Black is much better.

14...♗g6!

Avoiding the potential exchange of queens on c4.

15 h4

Or 15 ♙c1 c6! 16 f3 ♘xh2 and Black wins, e.g. 17 ♙f1 (if 17 ♙c4 ♘xf3+ 18 gx3 ♗xh1+ mates) 17...♘xf1! 18 ♗xf1 (18 ♗xh8 ♗g1) 18...♙a6.

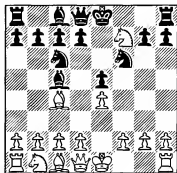
15...♗b8 16 ♘c3 ♘xf2 17 ♗f1 ♗xb5! 18 ♘xb5

White could have strung things out a bit with 18 ♖xf2 ♖xf2+ 19 ♗xf2 ♙xf2+ 20 ♗xf2 ♗xb2+.

18...♘d3+ 19 ♗d2 ♙b4+ 0-1

White resigned in view of 20 ♗e2 ♖xe4+ 21 ♙c3 ♗d8 22 ♗f2 ♙c5.

clear that the position is very complicated and White should be very careful. It is perhaps playable in correspondence chess or after long and hard preparation, say for example 100 blitz games in addition to independent analysis.



5...♙xf2+!

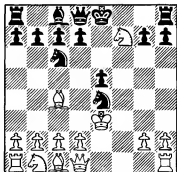
The point. Nothing else makes sense.

6 ♗xf2

The alternative 6 ♗f1 is considered in Game 27.

6...♘xe4+ 7 ♗g1

Enormously complicated is 7 ♗e3!?, after which Black has two possibilities:



a) 7...♖e7 and then:

1) 8 c3 d5 (not 8...♖c5+? 9 d4 exd4+ 10 cxd4 ♖e7 11 ♗c1! ♗f8 12 ♗f3 d5 13 ♙xd5 ♙g4+ 14 ♗xg4 ♘f2+ 15 ♗g3 ♘xd1 16 ♙xc6+ bxc6 17 ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 18 ♘e5 and White wins) 9 ♙xd5 ♖c5+ 10 d4 (10 ♙xc4

Game 26
Weir-Smits
Email 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 ♙c5 5 ♘xf7

There was a time when 5 ♘xf7 was thought to be the principal move. Now it is

♗f5+) 10...♖xd5 11 ♖xe5 ♖f6 12 ♖f3! (12 ♖xc6? ♗e4+ 13 ♖f2 ♖g4+ 14 ♖g3 0-0! 15 ♗f1 ♗xf1 16 ♗xf1 ♗xc6 with an attack – Pálkövi) 12...0-0 13 ♗b3 ♗e6 14 ♗xd5 ♖g4+ 15 ♖e4 ♖f2+ 16 ♖e3 ♖g4+ and the game would end in an attractive perpetual check.

a2) 8 ♖xh8! (critical) 8...♗g5+ (if 8...d5 9 ♗h5+ is strong) 9 ♖xc4 d5+ 10 ♗xd5 ♗f5+ 11 ♖f3 ♗g4+ 12 ♖f2 ♗xd1 13 ♗xc6+ bxc6 14 ♗xd1 ♗h5 15 ♗f1! ♗xh2 16 d3 0-0-0 17 ♖d2 followed by ♖f3 and ♗e3, White has good chances of consolidating.

b) 7...♗h4 is very interesting and can be analysed very deeply. First of all White only has one move: 8 g3 ♖xg3 9 hxg3 ♗d4+ 10 ♖f3 and then:

b1) 10...0-0!? (this is very risky, but after all chess is only a game) 11 ♗h4 e4+ 12 ♗xc4 (perhaps better is 12 ♖g2 d5 transposing to 10...d5) 12...♖e5+ 13 ♗xe5 ♗xc4 14 ♖g2 (if 14 ♗f5 ♗xf7 15 ♗xf7 ♗xf7+ 16 ♖g2 b6 17 d4 ♗b7+ 18 d5 ♗xd5+ 19 ♖g1 ♗f3 20 ♗f1 ♗h5 and Black wins) 14...♗xf7 15 ♗e2 b6 16 ♖g1 ♗b7 17 ♖c3 ♗g6 18 ♗d3 ♗g4 and Black is no worse here despite having a piece less.

b2) 10...d5 11 ♗h4 e4+ 12 ♖g2 0-0 when White has several tries:

b21) 13 ♗h5 ♗xf7 14 ♗f4 (14 ♗xd5 ♗f2+ 15 ♖h1 ♗f1+ is an immediate draw) 14...♗e6 15 ♗b3 ♖e5 or 15...g6 with an unclear game.

b2) 13 ♖c3!? dxc4 (13...♗xc4 14 ♗f4!) 14 ♗h5 and now with 14...♖e7! (Benedik) Black has good counterplay, e.g. 15 ♖xe4 ♗f5 16 ♖f5 h6 17 ♖c3 ♗g4 18 ♖h3 ♗f6+ 19 ♗xg4 ♗f1+ with a draw.

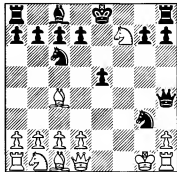
b3) 13 ♗b3 ♗xf7 and now if 14 ♗g1 ♗e5 15 ♖c3 g5! 16 ♗h6 ♗f5 or 14 ♗e2 ♗e6 with an attack, but the continuation 14 ♗f4 ♗xf4 15 gx4 ♗e6 16 ♖c3 might give White an advantage.

7...♗h4 8 g3

Not 8 ♗f1!? ♗f8 9 d3 ♖d6 10 ♖xd6+ cxd6 11 ♗e2 ♖d4 12 ♗d2 ♗g4 13 ♗d5

♖e2+ and Black wins.

8...♖xg3



9 ♖xh8

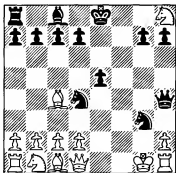
The only move since otherwise the black rook will live:

a) 9 hxg3? ♗xg3+ 10 ♖f1 ♗f8 11 ♗h5 d5! gives Black an overwhelming attack, e.g. 12 ♗xd5 ♖b4 13 ♗c4 b5! 14 ♗b3 (or 14 ♗xb5+ c6 15 ♗c4 ♖d5 16 ♗xd5 cxd5 and Black wins) 14...♖xc2 15 d4 ♗b7! 16 ♗xe5+ ♗xe5 17 dxe5 ♖xa1 18 ♗xh7 ♖xb3 and Black won in the game Schatunov-Garin, corr. 1973.

b) 9 d4? is strongly met with 9...♖e4! 10 ♗e3 exd4 11 ♖xh8 dxe3 and the pawn has similar properties to those of a minor piece. It is dangerously active and wickedly close to the white king. Fedjanov-Tokarev, corr. 1977-78, continued 12 ♗f7+ (after 12 ♗f3 ♖e5! 13 ♗f7+ ♖f8! Black has the following forced line at his disposal: 14 ♗xe3 ♗g4+ 15 ♖f1 ♗d1+ 16 ♖g2 ♗xc2+ 17 ♖g1 ♗d1+ 18 ♖g2 ♗g4+ 19 ♖f1 ♖xf7 20 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 and wins) 12...♖d8 13 ♗f3 ♖d4 14 ♗xe3 ♖xc2 15 ♗f3 ♗e1+ 16 ♗f1 ♗e3+ 17 ♖g2 d5 18 ♗f3 ♗h3+! 0-1.

9...d5?

This looks natural, but actually it loses because White has the extra options of 10 ♗f3 and 10 ♗e1. Also after 9...♖e4? 10 ♗f3! White wins. Instead Black should play 9...♖d4! when again we have a wide range of possibilities:



a) 10 d3? $\text{Qg}2+$ 11 $\text{Qf}1$ d6 and Black wins.

b) 10 $\text{Qf}7+$? $\text{Qe}7$ 11 $\text{hxg}3$ $\text{Wxg}3+$ 12 $\text{Qf}1$ d6! (12... $\text{Wf}4+$ 13 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Wg}5+$ is only a draw) 13 $\text{Qh}5$ (if 13 $\text{Qc}3$ $\text{Qg}4!$ 14 $\text{Qe}1$ $\text{Qh}3+$) 13... $\text{Qe}6!$ 14 d3 $\text{Bf}8+$ and Black wins.

c) 10 $\text{Qg}2?$ $\text{Qxh}1$ 11 $\text{Qxh}1$ $\text{Qe}4$ 12 $\text{Qg}1$ $\text{Qf}3+$ 13 $\text{Qf}2$ $\text{Wh}4+$ 14 $\text{Qe}2$ (14 $\text{Qe}3$ d5) 14... $\text{Qd}4+$ 15 $\text{Qf}1$ d6 and Black wins.

d) 10 c3?! d5!? (if this doesn't work Black also has 10... $\text{Qe}4$ 11 $\text{Wh}5+$ $\text{Wxh}5$ 12 $\text{Qf}7+$ $\text{Wxf}7$ 13 $\text{Qxf}7$ $\text{Qf}3+$ 14 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Qh}4+$ 15 $\text{Qh}3$ $\text{Qg}6$ 16 $\text{Qxe}5$ $\text{Qxe}5$ 17 d4 d5+ 18 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Qd}3$ with good compensation for the exchange) 11 $\text{cxd}4$ $\text{Qg}4$ 12 $\text{W}a4+$ c6 13 $\text{Qxd}5$ $\text{Qe}2+$ 14 $\text{Qf}1$ $\text{Wf}6+$ 15 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Qf}4+$ 16 $\text{Qg}3$ $\text{Qxd}5$ and Black is obviously OK here, e.g. 17 $\text{Wb}3$ $\text{Wf}4+$ 18 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Qe}4+$ 19 $\text{Qg}3$ $\text{Wxh}1$ 20 $\text{Qxg}4$ $\text{Wg}2+$ 21 $\text{Wg}3$ $\text{Qe}4+$ 22 $\text{Qh}3$ $\text{Qf}4+$ 23 $\text{Qh}4$ $\text{Qe}2!$ and wins. Any problems should occur earlier.

e) 10 $\text{hxg}3!$ (best) 10... $\text{Wxg}3+$ 11 $\text{Qf}1$ $\text{Wf}4+$ 12 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Wg}5+$ with a draw by perpetual check.

10 $\text{Wf}3!$

The downside to 9...d5 as I said. Instead:

a) 10 $\text{W}e1!$ $\text{Wd}4+$ 11 $\text{W}e3$ transposes to the game.

b) 10 $\text{hxg}3$ $\text{Wxg}3+$ 11 $\text{Qf}1$ $\text{Qh}3+$ 12 $\text{Bxh}3$ $\text{Wxh}3+$ 13 $\text{Qg}1$ $\text{Wg}3+$ with a draw in Mutafov-Sapundzhiev, corr. 1967.

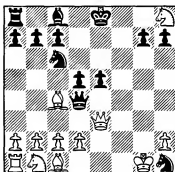
c) 10 $\text{Qxd}5$ $\text{Qh}3$ 11 $\text{Wf}3$ $\text{Wd}4+$ 12 $\text{W}c3$ $\text{Wxd}5$ 13 $\text{Wxg}3$ $\text{Wd}4+$ 14 $\text{W}e3$ and now

Black need not take the perpetual after 14... $\text{Wg}4+$, but can play for more with 14... 0-0-0! since if 15 $\text{Wxd}4$ $\text{Qxd}4$ 16 $\text{Qa}3?$ $\text{Bf}8$ and White is mated.

10... $\text{Wd}4+$

There are no sensible alternatives. 10... $\text{Qf}5$ 11 $\text{Qxd}5$ $\text{Qcd}4$ 12 $\text{W}e4$ $\text{Wg}5+$ (if 12... $\text{Qxc}2$ 13 $\text{Qf}7+$ $\text{Qd}8$ 14 $\text{Wxh}4+$ $\text{Qxh}4$ 15 d4 $\text{Qf}5$ 16 $\text{Qg}5+$ $\text{Qd}7$ 17 $\text{dxe}5$ $\text{Qxa}1$ 18 $\text{Qf}2$ and White is winning) 13 $\text{Wg}2$ $\text{Wh}4$ 14 h3 $\text{Qxc}2$ is unclear according to the Russian master Lepeshkin, but after 15 $\text{Qc}3!$ $\text{Qxa}1$ 16 $\text{Qb}5$ $\text{Bb}8$ 17 $\text{Qxc}7+$ $\text{Qf}8$ 18 b3 it seems that White has a winning game.

11 $\text{W}e3$ $\text{Qxh}1$



12 $\text{Qb}5?$

White lets the win slip away with this move.

Correct was 12 $\text{Wxd}4!$ $\text{Qxd}4$ 13 $\text{Qb}3$ and then:

a) 13... $\text{Qh}3$ 14 $\text{Qa}3!$ (De Zeeuw) 14... $\text{Qxb}3$ 15 $\text{axb}3$ $\text{Qd}7$ 16 d3 $\text{Bxh}8$ 17 $\text{Qxh}1$ $\text{Bf}8$ 18 $\text{Qe}3$ a5 19 $\text{Qg}1$ b6 20 $\text{B}e1$ c5 21 $\text{Qf}2!$ $\text{B}e8$ 22 $\text{Qg}3$ and Black has no real compensation for the piece.

b) 13... $\text{Qc}6$ if 14 $\text{Qxh}1$ $\text{Qd}7$ (if 14... 0-0-0 15 d3 $\text{Bxh}8$ 16 $\text{Qe}3$ and White wins) 15 d3! (not 15 $\text{Qg}6?$ $\text{hxg}6$ 16 d3 a5 17 c3 $\text{Qxb}3$ 18 $\text{axb}3$ $\text{Qf}5$ 19 d4 $\text{exd}4$ 20 $\text{cxd}4$ $\text{B}e8$ 21 $\text{Qc}3$ $\text{B}e1+$ 22 $\text{Qg}2$ $\text{Qc}6$ and Black has a lot of counterplay as there is no easy way for White to get his queenside pieces into play) 15... $\text{Bxh}8$ 16 $\text{Qe}3$ $\text{Qxb}3$ 17 $\text{axb}3$ $\text{Bf}8$ 18

♗g2 d4 19 ♖f2 ♗d5+ 20 ♗g1 a6 21 ♖d2 and White has an endgame he should win in a very high percentage of cases.

12...♗g4+ 13 ♗xh1 d4

13...♖f5 is also possible and then:

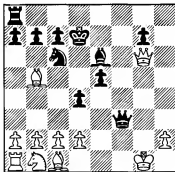
a) 14 d3 ♗f8 (if 14...0-0-0? 15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 ♖c3 ♗f8 17 ♗g3 ♗h5 18 ♗d2 and Black does not have enough for the material investment) 15 ♖d2 ♗d1+ 16 ♗g2 ♗xc2 17 ♗f3 ♖e7 18 ♗h5 with an unclear game, according to De Zeeuw.

b) 14 ♖c3 d4 15 ♗xe5+ ♗f8 16 ♗xc7 ♗g8 17 ♗g3! ♗xg3 18 hxg3 dxc3 19 ♗xc6 bxc6 20 d3 ♗e8 21 bxc3 ♗xh8 22 ♗b1 and the position looks like a dead draw.

14 ♗e2

White cannot prove an advantage anymore. If 14 ♗xe5+ ♗f8! 15 ♗xc7 (15 ♗xc6 bxc6 16 ♗c5+? is a bad idea: 16...♗g8 17 ♗xc6 ♗b7! 18 ♗xb7 ♗e8 and Black wins) 15...♗e6 16 ♗xc6 bxc6 17 ♗xc6 ♗d1+ 18 ♗g2 ♗e2+ 19 ♗g1 ♗e1+ 20 ♗g2 ♗e2+ with a draw.

14...♗f4 15 ♗g1 ♗e6 16 ♗h5+ ♗d7 17 ♖g6 hxg6 18 ♗xg6 ♗f3



19 ♖a3??

White is not completely up to date on the situation. After 19 ♗g2 ♗d1+ 20 ♗f1 ♗g4+ 21 ♗g2 the game would have ended in a fair draw.

19...♗d5!

Now Black is winning. The white king is caught in the open, while the black king sim-

ply dances away.

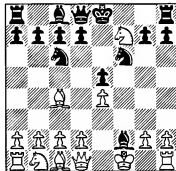
20 ♗xg7+ ♗d6 21 ♖c4+ ♗c5 22 ♗xc6 ♗g8 23 ♗xg8 ♗h1+ 24 ♖f2 ♗xh2+ 25 ♖f1 ♗xg8 26 ♖xe5 bxc6 27 ♖f3 ♗h3+ 28 ♖f2 ♗d5 29 ♖e1 ♗h2+ 30 ♖f1 ♗d6 0-1

Game 27

I. Belov-Pankratov

Correspondence 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♖xf7 ♗xf2+ 6 ♖f1



If you rely on statistics you should not play this line. In my database (2,500,000 games) Black has a score of 77% from this position! The idea of 6 ♖f1 is of course that Black cannot now attack with repeated checks. But on the other hand he retains the bishop in the enemy camp as a true avant-garde soldier.

6...♗e7 7 ♖xh8 d5!

Naturally Black is not preparing for the endgame.

8 exd5

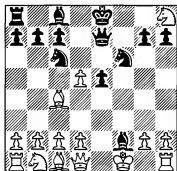
Here White has also tried:

a) 8 ♗xd5? ♗g4 9 ♗xf2 ♗xd1 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 ♗xd1 ♗c5+ and Black wins.

b) 8 d3?! dxc4 (8...♗g4 9 ♗d2 ♗h4 may be even stronger) 9 ♗xf2 ♗g4 10 ♗d2 0-0-0 11 ♖c3 cxd3 12 cxd3 ♗xh8 Black is at least slightly better here.

c) 8 ♗e2?! just has to be bad – I only

found one game where White wins after this. Also the games played with this move are mostly irrelevant to the actual evaluation of the position, so here I will follow my own track: 8... b6 9 d4 (if 9 d3 c5 10 c1 g4 11 c3 0-0-0 or 9 h5+ f8 10 e1 c4 11 f3+ g8 12 d3 f6 13 d6 c5 14 c3 d4 15 d1 hxg6 16 hxg6 g4 with advantage for Black) 9... cxd4 10 h5+ f8 11 g5 c5 12 c3 hx5 13 hx5 e6 14 hx7 f3 15 h4 dxe4 16 gxf3 h3+ 17 e1 e3+ 18 e2 exf3 19 e7+ e8 20 g6+ d7 21 d1+ d4 and Black wins.



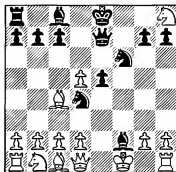
8... d4

8... g4 seems less dangerous, and after 9 e2 cxe2+ then:

a) 10 cxc2 d4+ 11 cxf2 c4+ 12 c3 g5+ 13 cxc4 xg2+ 14 d3 wh3+ 15 c4 (not 15 c4? b5+ 16 b4 a5+ 17 c5 wh4 and Black wins) 15... g2+ with perpetual check according to Gligoric. Let's look a bit further: 16 cxe5? f3+ 17 c4 0-0-0 18 d3 c5 19 c3 cxd5 20 f1 c6+ 21 b3 wb6+ 22 a4 d3 23 wf5+ wb8 24 xd3 (not 24 wb5? c5+ and Black wins) 24... xd3 25 cxd3 c6+ 26 b3 wxh1 27 c2 wxh2 with a complicated position. This analysis is of course far from conclusive. Let us just say that the position is very unclear.

b) 10 cxc2! sets Black the greatest challenge. 10... d4 11 cxf2 0-0-0 12 b3 (12 d6? might be an improvement) 12... c4 (worse is 12... cxd5? 13 a3 c5 14 c1 f8 15 g3

cxc2+ 16 d1 cxa1 17 b2 cxb3 18 axb3 hxh8 19 cxe5 1-0 Schüler-Leisebein, corr. 1998) 13 a3 g5 14 f7 d6 15 cxd6 xd6 16 g1 c2+ 17 f2 d4 18 g1 c2+ with a draw – Pálkövi. Again this position can be analysed for ages without a more definite conclusion being reached. It's your choice if this is worth your time.



9 d6

White has also tried:

a) 9 c3 g4 10 a4+ d7 11 cxf2 (if 11 cxd4 f6 12 dxe5 f4) 11... wh4+ 12 g3 wf6+ 13 c1 (or 13 g1 c2+ and wins) 13... wf5 14 cxd4 e4+ 15 f2 wf3+ 16 c1 wxh1+ 17 f1 0-0-0 18 d3 f8 19 e3 wxf1+ 20 d2 c2+ 21 c3 b6 22 a5 xc3 23 b3 d1+ 0-1 Maasen-Stadler, corr. 1954.

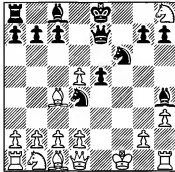
b) 9 e2 h4 and now:

b1) 10 g3 h3+ 11 c1 c4 12 b5+! (an improvement on Wead-E.Larsson, corr. 1967, which concluded 12 d3 cxd3 13 e3? c4+ 14 f2 cxf2 mate) 12... f8 13 d3 cxd3 14 hxg3 cxd3+ 15 d2 f4+ 16 c3 c5+ 17 c4 d5+ 18 b3 d4+ 19 c3 with perpetual check – Pálkövi. Black can also try 11...0-0-0!, e.g. 12 d3 hxh8 13 gxh4 dxd5 14 f1! c5 15 g4+ wb8 16 hxh3 cxc2+ 17 c2 cxa1 18 hxg7 f8 19 f2 c2 and the game is very unclear.

b2) 10 c3 c2 11 cxc2 g4 12 wb5+ d7 13 g3 wf6+ (also interesting is 13...0-0-0 14 g2 hxh8 15 h3 f5 16 d3 g5 17 f1

a6 18 ♖c4 ♖xc1 19 ♚xc1 ♖b6 20 ♗b3 ♗d6 with excellent compensation for the exchange) 14 ♘g1 ♖h3 15 ♗e2 0-0-0 16 d4 ♗f8 17 ♖d2 e4 gave Black a winning attack in Bar-Holzhauser, corr. 2001.

c) 9 h3 ♖h4! (this seems better than 9...♗g3 as the g3-square is designed for a black knight) 10 e3 Black now has:



c1) 10...♖f5 11 d4 ♖d7 12 g4 (12 d6 may be better here) 12...♖d6 13 ♖e2 ♖xd5 with an unclear game in Estrin-Jezek, corr. 1964. 13...0-0-0! is also possible.

c2) 10...♖e4!? 11 cxd4 exd4 12 ♖b5+ (12 d6? does not work: 12...cxd6! 13 ♖f7 ♖d7 14 ♖xd6+ ♖xd6 15 ♖d3 ♖f5 16 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 17 ♘g1 d3! ♖g3+ and Black is much better, while if 14 d3? ♖g3+ 15 ♘g1 ♖e2+ and wins) 12...♖d7 13 ♖xd7+ ♘xd7 14 ♗g4+ ♘d6 15 ♗e6+ (not 15 b3? ♗f8+ 16 ♘g1 ♖f2+ 17 ♘h2 ♗e5+ 18 g3 ♖xg3+ 19 ♘g1 ♖c5 and wins) 15...♗xe6 16 dxc6 ♖g3+ 17 ♘g1 ♖e2+ 18 ♘f1 ♖g3+ with a draw in Gorkov-Sapundzhiev, corr. 1966.

9...♗xd6

Black should be dynamic. After 9...cxd6! 10 ♖e2 ♖xe2 11 ♗xe2 ♖b6 12 d4 ♖g4 13 ♗b5+ ♖d7 14 ♗c4 White was much better in Da Fonscka-Celio, Brazil 1999.

10 ♖f7

White has also tried:

a) 10 e3 ♖g4 11 ♗a4+ and then:

a1) 11...b5!? 12 ♖xb5+ ♖xb5 13 ♗xb5+ c6 14 ♗c4 ♖e6 15 ♗e2 ♖b6 16 ♖a3 ♖g4

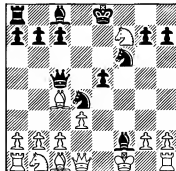
17 ♗c4 ♖e6 18 ♗a6!? (risky but after 18 ♗e2 Black has a draw) 18...♖d8 and Black has compensation.

a2) 11...♖d7 12 ♘xf2 ♗f6+ 13 ♖e1 and now not 13...0-0-0 14 ♗f1 ♗h4+ 15 ♗f2 ♖b6 16 g3 ♗h3 17 ♖f1! ♖xa4 18 cxd4 ♗xd4 19 d3 ♗h5 20 ♖e3 ♖d7 21 ♖g5 ♖d8 22 ♖c3 ♖xc3 23 bxc3 and after the storm White is much better, but immediately 13...♗h4+! 14 g3 ♖f3+ 15 ♖f2 ♗f6 16 d4 (or 16 ♖e3 ♗g5+) 16...♖xd4+ 17 ♖f4 0-0-0 with a dangerous attack.

b) 10 d3 ♖g4 11 ♖f7 ♗b6 12 ♗d2 ♖e2+ 13 ♘xf2 ♖g4+ 14 ♖e1 ♗f6 15 ♗xe2 ♖xe2 (Schiller-Uhlig, email 1996) and now 16 ♘xe2! when it seems that the white king may be able to evade the checks, e.g. 16...♗f2+ 17 ♘d1 ♗xg2 18 ♖e1 ♖f2+ 19 ♘d2 ♖e4+ 20 ♖e3 ♗f2+ 21 ♘xe4 ♗xc1+ 22 ♖e3 ♗h1+ 23 ♘xe5 ♗xh2+ 24 ♘d4 with four pieces for the queen, and if now 24...♗xc2 25 ♖c3 c5+ 26 ♘xc5 ♖c8+ 27 ♘d4 ♖xc4+ 28 ♘xc4 ♘xf7 29 ♗f1+ ♖e6 30 ♗f2 unexpectedly traps the queen.

10...♗c5 11 d3

11 ♖xe5? is refuted by 11...♗xe5 12 c3 ♖g4 13 cxd4 ♗f5 14 ♖e2 ♖xd4+ 15 ♖f3 0-0-0 16 ♖a3 ♖b6! (Páilkövi's move) 17 ♖c4 ♖d3 18 ♖xb6+ axb6 19 ♖f2 ♖e4+ 20 ♖e1 (if 20 ♘f1? ♖xf3 21 ♗xf3 ♗xf3+ 22 gxf3 ♗xf3+ 23 ♖e1 ♖f2 24 d4 ♖d3+ 25 ♘d2 ♖f4 and White is mated) 20...♗xf3 21 gxf3 ♖c5 with a clear advantage to Black.



11...e4?

This does not achieve terribly much. The idea is to swing the queen to the kingside, but this is not as big a threat as the players seemed to think. Better was 11...♙g4 12 b4 ♜e7 13 ♜d2 ♙c2+ 14 ♜xf2 ♚g4+ 15 ♜e1 (not 15 ♜g1? ♜h4 16 g3 ♜h3 0-1 Kulev-Klimov, corr. 1989) 15...♙f6 16 ♜xe2 ♚xe2 17 ♜xc2 ♜f2+ 18 ♜d1 ♜xg2 19 ♜c1 ♜f3+ 20 ♜d2 ♜f2+ 21 ♜c2 ♜f4+ with a draw according to Pálkövi. 11...♙h4!? is also possible.

12 c3?

The correct move was 12 b4! ♜f5 (if 12...♜b6 13 dxe4 ♙g4 14 ♜d2 ♚xe4 15 ♜f4 ♙f5 16 c3 ♚c2 17 ♜xf5 ♜c6 18 ♙b5 1-0 Soldini-Moro Lorente, email 2000) 13 dxe4 ♚xe4 14 g4 ♜f6 15 ♜g2 and White is much better according to Pálkövi.

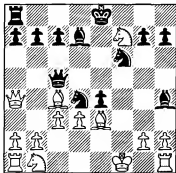
12...♙h4!

The only move. After 12...♚e6? 13 ♜e2 e3 14 d4 ♜f5 15 ♚e5 ♚g5 16 ♙xe3 ♙xe3+ 17 ♜e1 ♙f4 18 ♜f1 ♚ge4 19 g3 White was on his way to winning in the earlier game Blank-Pankratov, corr. 1993.

13 ♙e3 ♙g4 14 ♜a4+

The only move. If 14 ♜d2? ♜f5+ 15 ♙f4 ♙e2+ 16 ♜g1 ♚g4! and Black wins, or 14 ♜c1 ♜f5+ 15 ♙f4 ♚e2 16 dxe4 ♜c5 17 ♜c3 ♜xc4 18 ♚d2 ♜xf7 and Black is much better.

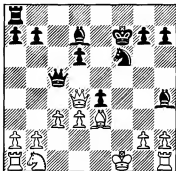
14...♙d7



15 ♚d6+

This move is for those who want to play; for those who want to draw there was 15 ♜d1 ♙g4 16 ♜a4+ with repetition. However, it is not really clear that White can keep the balance after 15 ♚d6+ so maybe he should have reconsidered. The attempt to play with three pieces for the queen by 15 ♜xd7+ fails to 15...♜xd7 16 cxd4 (or 16 ♙xd4 ♜f5+ 17 ♜g1 c5) 16...♜f5+ 17 ♜g1 ♚g4 18 ♚e5+ ♚xe5 19 dxe5 ♜f8 and wins.

15...cxd6 16 ♙f7+ ♜xf7 17 ♜xd4



17...♜f5+

Also playable was 17...♜xd4!? 18 ♙xd4 exd3 19 ♚d2 ♙g5 20 ♚f3 ♙f4 21 ♚d1 ♚e4 22 g3 ♙h6 23 ♜g2 d2 and Black is far from being worse.

18 ♜g1 ♜g6 19 ♙f2 ♙g5

Black trusts his long term compensation, which is a good plan. After 19...♙h3?! 20 ♙g3 ♙xg3 21 hxg3 ♜xg3 22 ♜f2 ♜xf2+ 23 ♜xf2 ♙f5 24 dxe4 ♚xe4+ 25 ♚f3 ♜c8 Black still has some compensation for the exchange, but White is basically a bit better.

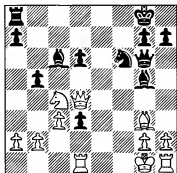
20 ♚a3

If 20 dxe4 ♙c6 21 ♚d2 ♙xd2 22 ♜xd2 ♚xe4 and Black has the initiative.

20...♙c6 21 ♚c4?

An understandable mistake. White wants to defer the pressure against g2 and does not care much for the pawn on d3. But actually this pawn becomes powerful, so White should have played 21 dxe4 ♚xe4 22 ♜c4+ d5 23 ♜d3 and he can probably hold.

21...exd3 22 ♖g3 ♗g8 23 ♖d1 b5



24 ♖xd6

White has no way out. 24 ♖a5 ♗e8! or 24 ♖c3 ♗e8 25 ♖xd3 ♗e4 26 ♗xa7 ♗a4 27 ♗b8+ ♖e8 28 ♗c8 ♗xd3 29 ♗e6+ ♗h8 wins for Black.

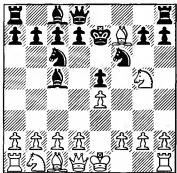
24...♖g4 25 ♖xd3 ♗d8 26 c4 ♗b6 27 c5 ♗xc5 28 ♗xc5 ♗xd3 29 ♗c3 ♗d1+ 30 ♗e1 ♗d4+ 31 ♗f1 ♖f8+ 32 ♗e2 ♗xg2 0-1

Game 28
Losev-Isaev
Kherson 1990

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+

The most serious try for an advantage.

5...♗e7



Here White has two promising moves, 6

♗d5 (Games 28-32) and 6 ♗b3 (Games 33-36).

6 ♗d5

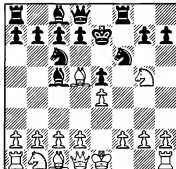
The most popular move. White has also tried:

a) 6 d4?! ♖xd4 7 c3 ♖c6 8 ♗b3 ♖f8 9 ♗c3 ♗xc3 10 fxe3 d6 and Black is slightly better.

b) 6 b4? ♖xb4! 7 d4 ♗xd4 8 c3 ♗c5 9 ♗b3 ♖f8! and Black is better, e.g. 10 ♗a3 (not 10 cxb4? ♗d4) 10...♖a6 11 ♖xh7 ♖xh7 12 ♗h5 d6 13 ♗xh7 ♗xf2+ 14 ♗d1 ♗d7 15 ♗xg7+ ♗e7 16 ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 and White has problems with the king and completing his development.

6...♖f8

Black can also play 6...d6 (see Games 31 & 32) or 6...♗e8 which will usually transpose. After 6...♖b4? White has 7 d4! exd4 8 0-0 ♖bxd5 9 exd5 ♗e8 10 ♗d3 h6 11 ♗g6! hxg5 12 ♗xg7+ ♗d6 13 ♗xg5 ♖f8 14 c4 and White won in Estrin-Vajs, corr. 1971.

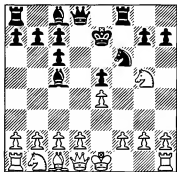


7 ♗xc6!?

Black does not have serious problems after this, at least not theoretically. In the game things are less clear. Nevertheless, if White wants to capture on c6 he should wait a move and play 7 0-0 d6 8 ♗xc6 when Black cannot accelerate his development by recapturing with the d-pawn. 7 0-0 is considered in Games 29 & 30.

Less dangerous is 7 ♖f3 d6 (worse is 7...♖d4?! 8 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 9 0-0 c6 10 c3 ♗b6

11 ♖b3 ♜x4 12 ♞h5 and White is better) 8 c3 ♙g4 9 ♜xc6 bxc6 10 d4 exd4 11 cxd4 ♜xf3 12 gxf3 ♖b6 13 ♜c3 ♞d7 14 ♜d2 (or 14 ♜c3 ♞h3 with compensation) 14...♞ae8 15 ♞a4 c5! 16 ♞xd7+ ♜xd7 17 dxc5 ♜xc5 with a roughly equal position, which was agreed drawn in Reithel-Walther, corr. 1979.
7...dxc6!



Black plays for quick development. If 7...bxc6 8 d3 d6 9 ♜f3 ♙g4 10 ♜e3 ♜xe3 11 fxe3 ♞b8 12 b3 ♞b6 13 ♞d2 and White is much better.

8 ♞e2

If 8 d3 ♜g4! (not 8...♞e8! 9 0-0 ♙g4 10 ♜f3 ♜d6 11 h3 ♜e6 12 ♜g5 and White is much better) 9 ♜h3 ♜xf2! (9...h6! is another idea and it seems to me that Black has enough compensation because of the weak knight on h3, e.g. 10 0-0 ♜e6 11 ♜d2 ♞d6 12 ♜b3 ♖b6 13 ♜d2 g5 and Black looks fine) 10 ♙g5+ and now, rather than 10...♜e8 11 ♞h5+ g6 12 ♞xh7 ♞d4 13 ♞xg6+ ♞f7 14 ♞f1! (De Zeeuw) when White is much better, Black can improve with 10...♜d6! 11 ♜xd8 (if 11 ♞h5 ♙g4 12 ♞xh7 ♞d7) 11...♜xd1 12 ♜xc7+ ♜xc7 13 ♜xd1 ♞f6 followed by ...♞g6 and Black regains the pawn with a big advantage; the knights are no match for the bishops. This is from a letter to *New in Chess Yearbook* by Tobi Usher, who is of course completely right.

8...♜g4?!

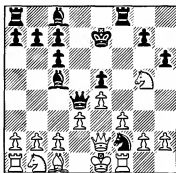
This time 8...♞e8! was an improvement,

e.g. 9 0-0 (or 9 d3 ♞g6 10 ♜f3 ♜h5 with compensation) 9...♞g6 10 d3 ♙g4 11 ♞e1 h6 12 b4 ♜d6 13 h3 ♖h5 14 c4 ♜d7 and Black is better.

9 f3 ♜f2?

This is a suicide mission. It was better to retreat again with 9...♜f6 10 d3 h6 11 ♜h3 ♜xh3 (not 11...g5 12 ♜f2 ♜e6 13 ♜c3 ♜xc3 14 ♞xc3 ♞d6 15 ♜d2 and Black has no compensation) 12 gxh3 ♞d7 13 ♞g2 ♜d8, though White is better nonetheless.

10 ♞f1 h6 11 d3! ♞d4



12 ♞xf2!

A very sound decision. Black's attack is now history.

12...♞xf2+ 13 ♞xf2 ♜xf2+ 14 ♜xf2 hxg5 15 ♜xg5+ ♜d6

White has two pawns for the exchange and a far superior pawn structure, and together these give him a huge advantage in the ending.

16 ♜d2 ♜e6 17 ♜h4!

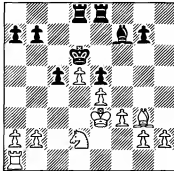
Targeting the e5-pawn which cannot be defended.

17...c5

Black loses the e-pawn in all variations: e.g. 17...♞ae8 18 ♙g3 c5 19 c3 g5 20 d4 cxd4 21 cxd4 c6 22 ♜xe5+ and White wins.

18 ♙g3 ♞ad8 19 ♜e3 ♞fe8 20 c3 ♜f7 21 d4 cxd4+ 22 cxd4 c5 23 d5

Better than 23 ♜xc5+ ♜c6 24 ♜b3 cxd4+ 25 ♜xd4 when White has more technical problems.



23...dxd5

There is no other defence against d2-c4. Black has no real chance of saving the endgame now, though there is always hope.

24 exd5 xd5 25 e4 c6 26 c1 b6 27 b4 d5 28 e2 d4 29 bxc5 b5 30 f2 d5 31 e1 a8 32 a5 d4 33 d1 xd1 34 xd1 d5 35 c2 h8 36 h3 h6 37 d2 g6 38 g4 c4 39 h4 a6 40 b2 c6 41 h5 d5 42 b3 c8 43 b4 c6 44 c3 f8 45 d5 f4+ 46 b3 d5 47 c6 a5 48 c7 a4+ 49 a3 c4 50 a5 d6 51 e4+ d7 52 g5 c2 53 h6 gxh6 54 gxh6 c6 55 h7 h6 56 d6! 1-0

A neat finish.

Game 29

Shabalov-I.Ivanov

US Championship, Parsippany 1996

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 d5 c5 5 xf7+ e7 6 d5 f8 7 0-0 d6 8 c3

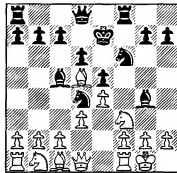
White prepares d2-d4 to curtail the black bishop on c5, while also giving the queen an escape route on the queenside. Others:

a) 8 d3? is strongly met by 8...g4! and White is already in trouble:

a1) 9 d2 h6 10 h3 d7 11 f3 e8 12 xc6 bxc6 13 b4 b6 14 c3? (after this White cannot guard the kingside anymore; instead 14 c4?! dxe4! 15 dxe4 xf3 16 c5

dxec5 17 bxc5 xc5 18 a5 d4 19 d2 d3 20 b1 g6 also gives strong initiative, but 14 d1 g6 15 h1 was a possible improvement) 14...d5 15 h2? (15 d1 was still better) 15...xf3! 16 gxf3 f4 17 e2 h5 18 dxf4 exf4 19 h1 xh3 20 d4 f8! 0-1 Bruinenberg-Nische, corr. 1964; there is no defence against ...f6-g6 and mates.

a2) 9 f3 d4! with a further branch:



a21) 10 c3? dxf3+ 11 gxf3 xh3 12 e1 e8 13 d2 d5 14 exd5 xf3 15 g5+ d7 16 d4 f7 17 e3 h6 0-1 Matatejv-Dobrotnin, Moscow 1996.

a22) 10 xb7? b8 11 a6 e8 12 d2 g6! 13 h1 d7 with a huge advantage for Black according to De Zeeuw; e.g. 14 c3? dxf3 15 dxf3 h5 16 d4 xf3 17 dxc5 h3! and wins, or 14 d4 xd1 15 dxc6+ hxg6 16 xd1 dxc2 and Black is clearly better.

a23) 10 d2! (the only move) 10...dxf3+ (10...e8 11 h3! h5 12 c4 dxf3+ 13 dxf3 xf3 14 xf3 xf3 15 gxf3 d5 is equal) 11 d5 d5 12 exd5 xf3 13 gxf3 d7 14 e3 f5 15 xc5 dxc5 16 e2 f6 17 a1 d6 and Black is slightly better according to De Zeeuw.

The plan of ...g4 followed by ...d4 gives Black a strong attack.

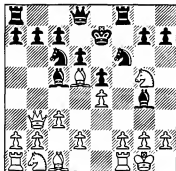
b) 8 h3, preventing ...g4, is considered in the next game.

c) 8 xc6 bxc6 9 f3 is a more promis-

ing continuation, eliminating the dangerous knight. After 9...♔g4 (if 9...♖e8 10 d4) 10 c3 ♖e8 (if 10...♗xe4 11 d4 ♔b6 12 ♖c1 or 10...d5 11 d4 exd4 12 e5 ♗e4 13 cxd4 and White is better) 11 d4 exd4 (11...♔b6 12 dxe5 dxe5 13 ♗bd2) 12 cxd4 ♔xf3 13 gxf3 ♔b6 14 ♗h1 followed by ♔e3 and ♗d2 White has reasonable prospects of consolidating. Black might consider 9...♗f7! 10 d4 (or 10 c3 ♗g8 11 d4 exd4 12 cxd4 ♔b6) 10...exd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗g8 12 ♗d3 ♖e8 with counterplay similar to the Spanish 3 ♔b5 f5 4 d3 variation.

8...♔g4 9 ♖e1

White has also tried 9 ♖b3! (if 9 ♖a4! ♖e8 10 ♔xc6 ♖xc6 11 ♖xc6 bxc6 and Black is slightly better – De Zeeuw) and now:



a) 9...♗a5? 10 ♖e2 c6 11 b4 cxd5 12 bxc5 dxc5 13 d4! ♗c4 14 ♗a3 cxd4 15 exd4 ♖c8 16 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 17 ♖b3 and White wins.

b) 9...h6?! 10 ♖xb7! ♖b8 11 ♖xc6 hxg5 (if 11...♗d7 12 ♗e6!) 12 ♖a6 ♔d7 (or 12...♖h8 13 d4 exd4 14 b4 ♔b6 15 ♔xg5) 13 ♖e2 ♔g4 14 ♖e1 ♗xd5 15 exd5 ♗f7 16 b4 ♔b6 17 a4 and White is close to winning.

c) 9...♖e8 10 ♔xc6 bxc6 11 d4 exd4 12 ♖c4 dxc3 13 ♗xc3 ♔d7 14 ♗f3 and White is better – De Zeeuw.

d) 9...♖b8 (trying to win a tempo after ♔xc6 bxc6) 10 d4 (10 d3 ♖d7 is unclear) 10...exd4 11 ♔xc6 bxc6 12 ♖c4 and White has a strong threat in e4-e5, e.g. 12...dxc3 (if

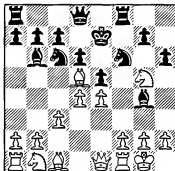
12...♔b6 13 cxd4 h6 14 e5! or 12...h6 13 cxd4 ♖b4 14 ♖c3 ♖xd4 15 ♔e3) 13 e5! cxb2 14 exf6+ ♖xf6 15 ♖c1+ ♔c6 16 ♖xe6 ♗d7 17 ♖g4! and wins.

e) 9...♔b6! 10 ♔xc6 (if 10 h3 h6 11 d4 hxg5 12 hxg4 ♖e8!?) or 11 ♗f7 ♖d7 12 hxg4 ♖xg4) 10...bxc6 11 h3 h6 12 hxg4 hxg5 13 d4 ♖d7 14 ♖d1 and White is better according to De Zeeuw, but 13...♖e8! may be an improvement, e.g. 14 ♖d1 ♖g6 15 f3 ♖f7! followed by ...♖h8 with an attack as the rook on the f-file deters the white king from running off via f2.

9...h6!

The white knight has no healthy retreat.

10 d4 ♔b6!



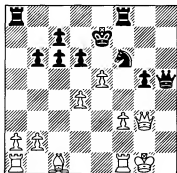
Black keeps the tension since it is White who has a problem to solve. If 10...exd4? 11 ♔xc6 bxc6 12 e5 ♗d5 13 h3 ♔f5 14 b4 ♔b6 15 c4 and White is much better.

11 h3 hxg5 12 hxg4 ♖d7 13 ♗a3

Not 13 ♔xg5? ♖xg4 14 ♔xf6+ ♖xf6! and the black attack is very dangerous; or if 13 a4 a5 14 ♖e2 exd4 15 ♔xg5 d3! 16 ♖d1 (or 16 ♖xd3 ♖xg4 17 ♔xc6 bxc6 18 ♔e3 ♖h4) 16...♖h8 and Black takes over the initiative.

13...♖xg4 14 f3 ♖h5 15 ♗c4 g4 16 ♗xb6 axb6 17 ♖g3 exd4 18 ♔xc6 bxc6 19 cxd4 gxf3 20 gxf3 g5 21 e5

The position is very unclear; e.g. 21...♗h7 (the only move) 22 ♗g2 ♖ae8 23 ♔d2 ♖g6 24 ♖ae1 ♗d8 25 ♖h1 with a mess. Unfortunately the players decided to agree a draw.

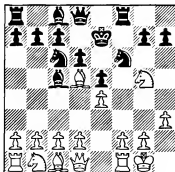


½-½

Game 30
Bex-Doner
Biel 1995

My annotations to this game are based on those by Maarten de Zeeuw in *New in Chess Yearbook* #65.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♗e7 6 ♗d5 ♗f8 7 0-0 d6 8 h3?!



This looks like a beginner's mistake. White prevents ...♗g4 but creates a weakness in his own camp and loses valuable time while doing so.

8...♗e8 9 d3

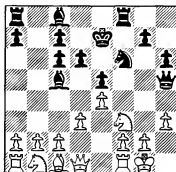
After 9 c3 ♗g6 10 d4 ♗b6 11 f4 (if 11 ♗e3 ♖h5! 12 ♗d2 ♖f4 and Black has a strong initiative, e.g. 13 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 14 g3

♗xg5 15 ♗h2 ♗h5! 16 gxf4 ♗xh3+ 17 ♗g1 ♗g4 18 f3 exd4! and White has no defence) 11...exf4 12 ♗xf4 h6 13 ♖f3 ♖xd5 14 exd5 ♗xf4 15 dxc6 bxc6 and Black was slightly better in Wegelin-Pohl, corr. 1993.

9...♗g6!

Black should not take action before he is ready and after this move he is.

Nevertheless, also interesting is 9...h6! 10 ♖f3 ♗h5 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 and now:



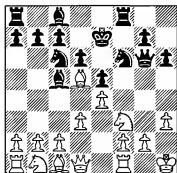
a) 12 ♖c3 g5! gives Black a strong attack; whereas after 12...♗g4 13 ♖a4 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 15 gxf3 ♗b6 16 f4! White parries threat of ...g7-g5 with a better game, e.g. 16...exf4 17 ♗xf4 ♖xe4 18 ♖xb6 axb6 19 ♗xh6 gxh6 20 dxe4 and White is slightly better.

b) 12 ♗e3 ♗xh3!? 13 gxh3 ♖xe4 14 dxe4 (14 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 15 d4 ♗f5 16 dxc5 ♗xh3 17 cxd6+ ♖d7 18 dxc7+ ♗xc7 19 ♖d2 ♖xd2 20 ♗xd2 ♗f3 21 ♗a5+ ♖b7 22 ♗d4 ♗g3+ 23 fxg3 ♗xg3+ also leads to a draw) 14...♗xf3 15 ♖d2 ♗af8 16 ♖xf3 ♗xf3 17 ♗xc5 dxc5 (17...♗xh3 18 ♗e1 is less clear) 18 ♗e1 ♗g6+! 19 ♖f1 ♗xh3 intending 20...♗h1+ 21 ♖e2 ♗xe4+ with perpetual check.

10 ♗h1

10 ♗xc6 was probably an improvement. The bishop is not doing anything for the defence, while after a quick ...♖c6-d4 the knight can suddenly turn into one hell of an attacker.

10...h6 11 ♖f3



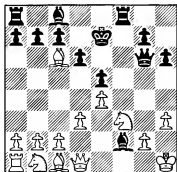
11...♗g4?

11...♗d5! was simple and also the best. 12 exd5 ♖b4 13 ♖c3 ♖h5 14 ♖e1 (not 14 a3? ♗g4! 15 axb4 ♗xf3! 16 ♖xf3 ♗xf3 17 bxc5 ♗f6 and Black will win) 14...♗xd1 15 ♖xd1 ♖xd5 16 c4 ♖f4 17 ♖c3 ♗e6 and Black is slightly better.

12 ♗xc6?

Now there is no time for this. Better was 12 ♖e2! (not 12 hxg4 ♗xg4 13 ♖bd2 ♖h5+ 14 ♗g1 ♖d4 with a decisive attack) 12...♖h5 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 ♖bd2 g5 15 c3 ♖f6 16 d4 ♗b6 17 dxe5 dxe5 18 ♖c4 ♗a6 19 b3 ♗e6 with an unclear position.

12...♖xf2+! 13 ♗xf2 ♗xf2



14 ♗a4?!

Not 14 ♖f1 ♖g3! 15 ♖c3 ♗xf3! and Black wins, while after 14 ♖e2 ♗b6 15 ♗d5 ♗xh3 16 ♖bd2 ♗g4 17 ♖e1 c6 18 ♗c4 ♗f4

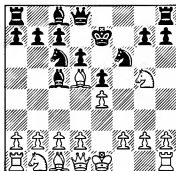
Black is much better – White is not a piece up, he is essentially a rook down!

14...♗xh3 15 gxh3 ♗xf3 0-1

White is mated in 8 moves.

Game 31
Krüger-Moormann
Email 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♗g5
♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♗e7 6 ♗d5 d6



Black does not fear the thrust 7 ♖f7 at all, and it is also only an illusion; after 7 ♖f7? ♗f8 8 ♖xh8? ♗xf2+! 9 ♖f1 ♗g4 and Black wins.

7 c3

The most popular move, but Martin de Zeeuw is convinced that 7 d3 is stronger; this is investigated in Game 32.

7...♖e8 8 d4?!

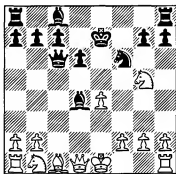
Better is 8 d3 ♗f8 9 ♖f3 (or 9 0-0 ♗g4 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♖f3 ♖g6 12 ♖bd2 ♖h5 with compensation for the pawn) 9...♖g6 10 ♗g5 ♗g4 11 ♗xc6 bxc6 12 h4 h6 13 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 14 b4 ♗b6 15 ♖bd2 ♗xf3 16 gxh3 ♗g2 17 ♗f1 ♖h2 18 ♖a4 with an unclear position; but not 11 ♖bd2? ♖xg5! 12 ♖xg5 ♗xd1 13 ♗xd1 (or 13 ♗xd1 ♖g4) 13...♖g4! and White had problems in Gikas-Wedberg, Lugano 1989.

8...exd4 9 ♗xc6

Worse is 9 cxd4? ♖xd4 10 ♖c3 c6! (10...♖h5 11 ♖d3 ♗f8 12 b4 ♗b6 13 ♖a4

♖c6 14 ♖xb6 axb6 was unclear in Karpov-Beliavsky, USSR 1983) 11 ♖f7 (if 11 ♗c4 ♗h5 12 0-0 ♗g4! 13 ♗d2 h6 and Black is much better) 11...♗d8 12 ♗b3 (12 ♗e3 ♗b6 13 0-0 ♗g4! followed by ...h7-h6 and Black is much better) 12...♗f8 13 0-0 ♗g4 14 ♗e1 ♖xb3 15 axb3 ♗e8 Black is slightly better here. He has active pieces, a better pawn structure and the two bishops. But then, he also has the king in the centre for a few more moves.

9...♗xc6 10 cxd4 ♗xd4



10...♗g4? does not work: 11 f3 ♗xd4 12 fxg4 ♖xg4 13 ♖a3! ♗f2+ 14 ♖f1 and the attack is gone.

11 0-0 ♗b6?

Unfortunately this does very little for the black position. Both alternatives were better:

a) 11...♗c5 12 ♖d2 ♗g4 (if 12...♗xg5 13 ♖f3 ♗g6 14 ♗xd4 ♗g4 15 ♖g5 and White is OK) 13 ♖g3 ♗e5 and Black looks better.

b) 11...♗c5!? 12 ♗b3 ♗f8 13 ♖c3 ♗xc3 14 bxc3 h6 15 ♖f3 ♖xe4 16 ♗e1 ♖d8 and White does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

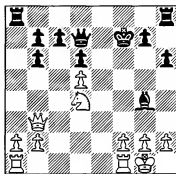
12 ♖c3 ♖f8

This looks like a waste of time, but it does make some sense: Black avoids the check on d5 and then develops. After 12...♗g4 13 ♗b3 ♗af8 14 ♖d5+ ♖d7 15 ♗e3 ♗xe3 (G.Lee-Rumens, British Championship 1981) then 16 fxе3! and White is clearly better according to Pálkövi.

13 ♖d5 h6 14 ♖f3 ♗g4 15 ♗e3 ♖xd5 16 exd5 ♗d7 17 ♗xb6 axb6 18 ♗b3 ♖f7?

A grave positional error. Necessary was 18...♗xf3! 19 ♗xf3+ ♗f7 20 ♗c3 ♖g8 21 ♗ac1 ♗c8 22 ♗d3 h5 when White is better, but Black has good drawing chances.

19 ♖d4!



The problem in this position is that White now obtains a strong post for the knight on e6.

19...♗he8 20 h3 ♗h5 21 ♖e6 ♖g8 22 f4 ♗f7 23 f5 ♗a4 24 ♗d3 1-0

Black resigned as this was a correspondence game and in such games an advantage of these proportions is decisive; e.g. 24...♗xe6 25 dxc6! ♗h4 (if 25...♗f8? 26 f6 wins) 26 f6 ♗xc6 27 f7+ ♖f8 28 ♗h7 with a terrible attack.

Game 32
Anand-Beliavsky
Linares 1991

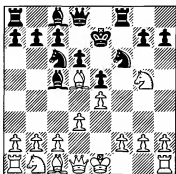
1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♖e7 6 ♗d5 d6

The game actually began 6...♗e8!? 7 d3 d6.

7 d3 ♗e8

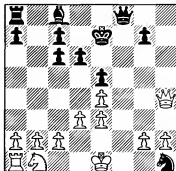
7...♗f8?! is less good; Black does not have compensation after 8 ♗c3 ♗xc3 9 fxе3 ♖g4 10 ♗d2 ♗f6 11 ♖f3 ♗h6 12 ♖e2 ♗f8 13 ♖c3 and 14 ♗af1.

But Black can still play 7...♞f8 and then:



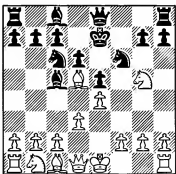
a) 8 ♙e3 ♞xc3 (8...♙g4?! 9 ♞d2 ♙xc3 10 ♙xe3 ♞d7 11 h3 ♙h6 12 ♙f3 ♙xf3 13 gxf3 ♙xd5 14 exd5 ♙b8 15 ♙g2 and White is much better, Koetsier-Kaupat, corr. 1998) 9 ♙xe3 ♙a5! (the idea is to exchange the queen's knight for the white bishop – the other knight will be useful on the kingside; if instead 9...♙g4 10 ♙xh7 and White is much better) 10 0-0 (prophylaxis does not work here: 10 a3? c6 11 ♙a2 ♙b6 12 ♙c1 ♙g4 13 b4 ♙xe3 14 ♙d2 ♙g4 15 bxa5? ♙xg2+ 16 ♙xg2 ♙e3+ and mates, or 15 ♙c3 ♙d4 16 ♙f7 ♙xg2+ 17 ♙xg2 ♙xc3+ 18 ♙f2 ♙e6 and Black wins) 10...c6 11 ♙b3 ♙xb3 12 axb3 ♙g4 13 ♙xf8 ♙xf8 14 ♙e2 ♙f6 15 ♙f3 ♙h6 16 h3 ♙f6 (not 16...♙xe3+? 17 ♙xc3 ♙xe3 18 ♙a3! and the knight is trapped) 17 ♙bd2 g5 with compensation for the pawn.

b) 8 ♙xc6! bxc6 9 ♙e3 is the most dangerous. Black must be very vigilant in order to get enough initiative for the pawn: 9...♙xe3 (9...♙g4?! 10 ♞d2 ♙xc3 11 ♙xe3 ♙e8 12 ♙f3 and White was much better in Van Vugt-Eastwood, corr. 1998) 10 ♙xe3 ♙g4 11 ♙xh7! (a very hard move with which White takes back the initiative; if instead 11 ♙c1 ♙e8 12 ♙f3 ♙xf3! 13 gxf3 ♙g4+ or 11 ♙f3 ♙xc3 12 ♙d2 ♙g4 13 ♙g5+ ♙f7 14 h3 ♙f6 15 ♙c3 h6 16 ♙g3 ♙b8 and the game is unclear) 11...♙f2 12 ♙h5 ♙xh1 13 ♙xf8 ♙xf8 14 ♙h4+ and then:



b1) 14...♙e8 15 ♙d2 ♙g4 (15...g5? 16 ♙h5+ ♙d7 17 0-0-0 ♙f2 18 ♙f1 White wins) 16 ♙b3 a5! (not 16...c5?! 17 c4 ♙f7 18 ♙xg4 ♙f2+ 19 ♙d1 ♙f1+ 20 ♙c2 ♙xd3+ 21 ♙xd3 ♙f2+ 22 ♙e2 ♙xg4 23 h3 and White is much better in the endgame) 17 h3 (if 17 ♙xg4 ♙f2+ 18 ♙d1 ♙xc3 19 ♙h5+ ♙e7 20 ♙e2 ♙g1+ 21 ♙d2 ♙xh2 22 ♙g4 ♙g3 and Black is no worse) 17...♙e6 18 ♙e2 ♙b8 19 ♙xh1 a4 20 ♙f1 ♙g8 21 ♙c1 ♙xb2 22 ♙d1 ♙xa2 and the position is very unclear.

b2) 14...♙f6 15 ♙xf6+ gxf6 16 ♙f1 f5 17 ♙g1 ♙xe4 18 dxe4 ♙g3 19 hxg3 ♙g4 20 ♙d2 ♙h5 21 ♙f1 ♙g6 White is better here, but Black should make a draw.



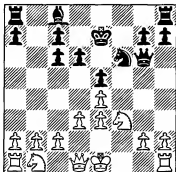
8 ♙xc6!

If 8 ♙e3?! ♙xc3 9 ♙xe3 ♙g6 10 ♙f3 ♙xd5 11 exd5 ♙b4 and Black is OK, while 8 c3 returns to 8 d3 in the notes to Game 31.

8...bxc6 9 e3 g6

If 9...b6 10 0-0 g4 11 f3 h5 12 bbd1 af8 13 we2 h6 14 xxb6 cxb6 15 d4! and White is better.

10 f3 xe3 11 fxe3



11...xg2?

After this Black loses all his counterplay. Up to now g2 was weak, now it is exchanged. Better was 11...b8 12 b3 h6 (worse is 12...d4 13 we2 wh6 14 d2 d5 15 c3 d4 16 d1 f8 17 h3 a6 18 f1 f6 19 ce1 c5 20 xe5! and White is much better) 13 we2 g5 14 0-0 g4 15 fd2 wg5 16 e4 c5 17 c3 c6 and it seems that Black has compensation for the pawn, e.g. 18 f2 f8 19 c2 d7 (an important move preventing dg3-f5) 20 wg3 df6! and Black is not necessarily worse here.

12 g1 h3 13 xg7+ d8

If 13...e8 14 g3 h6 15 we2 and White is much better.

14 g3

White is a clear pawn up. There now follows a game in which White is winning for 39 moves, but then throws it all away. At this time Anand was still a very young man who had a tendency to play too fast. Black tries to hang on, but even though White makes many mistakes, it is only after the final blunder that the advantage switches to Black.

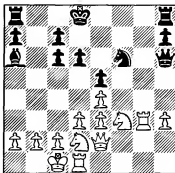
14...wh6 15 we2 g4?

Black achieves nothing by this.

16 h3 f6

If 16...xe3 17 g5 or 16...xe3 17 we3 xe3 18 a3 and the knight is trapped.

17 bbd2 a6 18 0-0-0



18...e7 19 h4

19 fgd1! looked better.

19...ag8 20 g5 f8 21 h2?

Again 21 fgd1 h6 22 f5g2 looked better.

21...wf7 22 b3 h6 23 ff5?!

This brings the black bishop back into play. Better was 23 ggl.

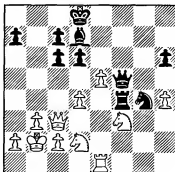
23...c8 24 ff3 wh5 25 df1 g3?!

After 25...h3 26 ff2 g4 27 dxg4 dxg4 28 h3 White is still better, but only so much.

26 d4 xf3 27 dxf3 dg4 28 wd3 ff8

29 wc3 d7 30 b2 exd4 31 exd4 d8

32 e5 ff4 33 e1 wf5



34 c1

34 wa5! wins without effort.

34...♗c8 35 a4 d5 36 ♖b2 ♙e8 37 ♚e2 ♜f8 38 a5?!

This move is not bad, just unnecessary.

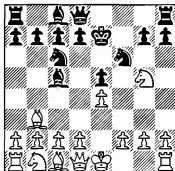
38...♗b7 39 a6+?! ♗xa6 40 e6 ♗b7 41 ♚e1 ♜d6 42 b4 ♖f2 43 ♖b3 ♙e4 44 ♖c5+??

A horrible mistake, losing a piece. 44 ♜e3 ♜f8 45 ♖fd2 would still have maintained White's advantage.

44...♜xc5! 0-1

Game 33
Elison-K. Werner
Email 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♙c5 5 ♙xf7+ ♗e7 6 ♙b3



Here the bishop is less exposed than on d5, but White no longer has the useful exchange ♙xc6.

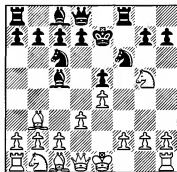
6...♙f8

Others:

a) 6...d6 7 d3 ♙a5?! (7...♙f8 returns to the game) 8 ♙e3 (not 8 ♖f7? ♙xf2+ 9 ♗f1 ♜f8 10 ♗xf2 ♖xb3 11 axb3 ♜xf7 12 ♙g5 h6 13 ♙xf6+ ♜xf6+ and Black is better) 8...♙xc3 9 fxe3 ♖xb3 10 axb3 and White simply has a pawn more.

b) 6...♙f8! is interesting as it is the only move that prevents the immediate d2-d3, i.e. 7 d3? ♙xf2+ or if 7 0-0 d6 8 d3 ♙g4 9 ♖f3 ♖d4 10 ♖bd2 ♖h5 11 c3 ♖xf3+ 12 ♖xf3 ♜xf3 13 ♜xf3 ♜xf3 14 gxf3 ♙hf8 and

White's extra f-pawn is fixed, while after 8 ♖c3 h6 9 ♖f3 ♙g4 Black has counterplay. Refutation attempts with ♖g5-f7 turn out fine for Black: 7 ♖f7 ♙xf2+ 8 ♗xf2 (if 8 ♗f1? d5) 8...♙a5! 9 ♙f1 (not 9 ♖xh8? ♖xc4+ and mates) 9...♖xb3 10 axb3 ♗xf7 ♖xe4 8 0-0 ♖xf2 9 ♜h5 d5 10 ♙xd5 ♙e6 or 7 0-0 d6 8 ♖f7? ♖d4! 9 ♖xh8 ♙g4 10 ♜e1 ♜c8! 11 ♗h1 ♙f3! 12 ♙g1 ♜h3! 13 gxf3 ♖xf3 and wins according to Estrin. 7 d3!



The best solution and the most dangerous plan against the Traxler. White simply exchanges dark-squared bishops and keeps the centre solid.

7...d6

Others:

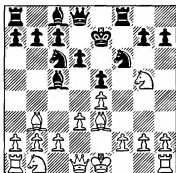
a) 7...♜e8?! 8 ♙e3 d6 9 ♖f3 ♙g4 10 ♖bd2 ♖d4 11 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 12 c3 ♙b6 13 h3 ♜h5 14 ♙f1 ♙xf3 15 ♖xf3 ♖d7 16 ♜e2 ♙f4 17 ♖d4 ♜xc2+ 18 ♖xe2 and White was just a pawn up in Kariakin-Zubov, Kramatorsk 2002.

b) 7...h6! (the best move) 8 ♖f3 d6 9 ♙e3 (not 9 h3?! ♜e8 10 ♖c3 ♖d4! 11 ♖xd4 ♙xd4 12 0-0 ♜g6 13 ♗h2 ♙d7 with full compensation for the pawn; this is basically the kind of position Black hopes for in the Traxler) 9...♙g4 10 ♙xc5 dxc5 11 ♖bd2 ♖d4 12 h3 ♙h5 13 0-0 (not 13 g4 ♖xg4 14 ♖xd4?? ♜xd4 0-1 Paoli-Steiner, Reggio Emilia 1951) 13...♖xf3+! (if 13...♙d6 14 g4 ♖xf3+ 15 ♜xf3 ♖d7 16 ♜g3 ♙g6 17 ♖c4

and White is much better) 14 ♖xf3 ♖c8! 15 ♖h2 g5 16 ♖c2 g4 (White was planning 17 ♖e3 so there is no time for moves like 16...a5 and ...♗a6). 17 hxg4 ♖xg4+ 18 ♖g1 ♖e8 and Black has compensation here.

8 ♗e3

8 0-0 is examined in Games 34 & 35.



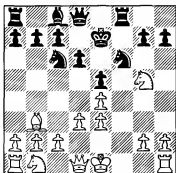
8...♗e3?!

This is often a very bad idea. All Black's compensation is on the f-file, whereas now he has to share it. Instead:

a) 8...♗g4?! 9 ♖d2 h6 10 ♗xc5 dxc5 11 h3 ♗c8 12 ♖f3 ♖d6 13 ♖a3 ♖d4 14 ♖c4 ♖xf3+ 15 gxf3 ♖e6 16 ♖e3 and White is clearly better.

b) 8...♖e8 9 ♗xc5 dxc5 10 0-0 ♖g6 11 ♖f3 ♗g4 12 ♖bd2 ♗ad8, intending ...♖h5-f4, and Black has compensation according to Schneider.

9 ♖e3



De Zeeuw says this position is much better for White. The problem for Black is that there are no real white weaknesses. Black has the f-file, but there are no targets there anymore.

9...♖e8

If 9...♗g4 10 ♖xh7 and White comes out a pawn up.

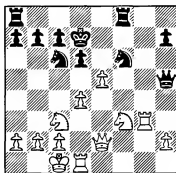
10 ♖c3 ♖g6 11 ♖f3 ♖xg2?!

White would have more problems converting his advantage after 11...♗g4 12 0-0 ♗ae8.

12 ♗g1 ♖h3 13 ♗xg7+ ♖d8 14 ♗g3 ♖h5 15 ♖e2 ♗g4 16 0-0-0

Black has problems completing his development and he is a pawn down. In short, White has a winning position.

16...♖a5 17 ♗a4 ♗d7 18 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 19 d4 exd4 20 exd4 ♖c6 21 e5 1-0



Black had simply had enough.

Game 34

Paoli-Wagman

Correspondence 1965/66

My annotations here are based on those by Martin de Zeeuw in *New in Chess Yearbook* #66.

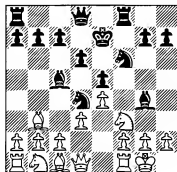
1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♖e7 6 ♗b3 ♗f8 7 d3 d6 8 0-0

8 ♗e3 as played in Game 33 looks much stronger, and it is not just appearances! After

White castles short Black's attack has a fixed target and every white mistake runs the risk of being the last one.

8...♠g4 9 ♠f3 ♠d4!

The alternative way to attack with 9...♞c8 is considered in Game 35.



10 ♠e3!

10 ♠bd2 ♠h5 (or 10...♞e8 11 h3 ♞h5 12 c3 ♠xf3+ 13 ♠xf3 ♠xf3 14 ♞xf3 ♞xf3 15 gxf3 ♠h5 and the position is about equal) 11 c3 ♠xb3! (not 11...♠e6? 12 h3 ♠xf3 13 ♠xf3 ♠hf4 14 ♠xe6 ♠xe6 15 ♠g5 with huge advantage for White, while if 11...♠xf3 12 ♠xf3 ♠xf3+ 13 gxf3 ♠f4 14 d4 ♠b6 15 ♠h1) 12 axb3 ♠f4 13 ♠c4 (De Zeeuw believes this is much better for White; I disagree) 13...♞d7 14 ♠e3 (if 14 ♠e3?! ♠h3+ 15 ♠h1 ♠xe3 16 fxe3 ♠g5 regains the pawn) 14...♠b6 and Black keeps up the pressure.

10...♞e8?!

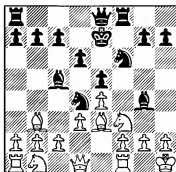
a) 10...♠xf3+ 11 gxf3 ♠h3 12 ♠c1 ♞c8 13 ♠h1 ♞h5 (or 13...♠h5 14 ♠g1 ♠d8 15 c3) 14 ♠g1 g6 15 ♠d2 ♞h4 16 ♞e2 ♠b6 17 c3 ♠ae8 18 d4 and White is better.

b) 10...♠xf3! (a new move) 11 gxf3 ♞c8 12 c3 ♠xb3 13 axb3 ♞h3 with excellent compensation for the pawn, e.g. 14 ♠d2 a6 15 ♠h1 ♠f7 16 ♠g1 ♠xe3 17 fxe3 ♠af8 18 d4 ♠d8 19 ♠g3 ♞h6.

11 ♠h1?

White should have played 11 ♠xd4! ♠xd4 12 c3 ♠b6 13 ♠bd2 ♞g6 14 ♠h1 ♞h5 15

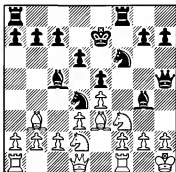
♞c2 ♠d7 16 ♠d1 with the idea of ♠e4, ♞d2 and ♠e3.



11...♞h5

Also possible was 11...♠xe4!? 12 ♠xd4! (the only move; if 12 dxe4? ♠xf3 and Black wins) and now 12...♞h5! is the same as in the game. Worse is 12...♠xd4?! 13 dxe4 ♠xf3 14 gxf3 ♠xb2 15 ♠d2 ♠xa1 16 ♞xa1 ♞h5 17 ♞c3 when the position is unclear.

12 ♠bd2



12...♠xe4!

You should remember this typical Traxler tactic as it might come in handy. The number of black pieces targeting the white king now becomes too great.

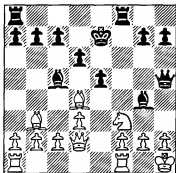
It is also useful to compare these lines in the Traxler (after 6 ♠b3 and 6 ♠d5) with the Janisch Variation of the Spanish (1 e4 e5 2 ♠f3 ♠c6 3 ♠b5 f5! – specifically the line with 4 d3 fxe4 5 dxe4 ♠f6 6 0-0 ♠c5) as

they have a lot in common.

13 ♗xd4

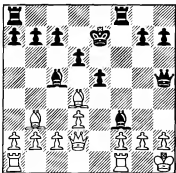
After 13 dxe4 ♗xf3! 14 ♗g5+ ♜xg5 15 ♖xf3 ♜h5 16 ♖xd4 ♗xd1 17 ♖f5+ ♖f8 18 ♗axd1 g6 Black has a technical won position.

13...♖xd2 14 ♜xd2



14...♗xf3?

Black did not play this game well. Instead with 14...♗xf3! 15 ♗d5 (if 15 ♗c3 ♗h3! wins) 15...♗xd4 16 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 17 c3 ♗b6 18 gxf3 ♜xf3+ 19 ♖g1 ♗f8 Black wins as ...♗f6-g6 cannot be prevented; 20 ♜d1 ♗xf2+ 21 ♗xf2 ♜xf2+ 22 ♖h1 ♗xb2 is clearly hopeless.



15 ♗g1?

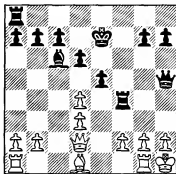
It was better to suffer with 15 ♗xc5 ♗f6 16 ♗fe1 ♗g6 17 ♗xe5+ ♜xe5 18 gxf3 ♜xc5 19 ♜f4, although after 19...♗h8! 20 d4 ♗g5 (now Black would like the queens off) 21 ♜c4+ ♖d8 22 f4 ♖b5 23 a4 ♜c6 24 ♗d5

♜d7 25 ♗xb7 ♗e8 Black has a clear advantage.

15...♗xd4 16 c3

If 16 gxf3 ♜xf3+ 17 ♗g2 ♗f4 18 c3 ♗b6 19 ♗d1 ♜c6 and Black still has a strong attack still. For one thing, how are the white pieces going to get back into the game?

16...♗c6 17 cxd4 ♗f4 18 ♗d1



18...♜f5?

Black misplays his attack terribly. Instead 18...♜h4! 19 dxe5 ♜xf2 20 exd6+ ♖xd6 21 ♜xf2 ♜xf2 22 ♗f3 ♗xf3 23 gxf3 ♗xf3+ 24 ♗g2 ♗e8 and Black wins.

19 dxe5 ♗xf2?!

Now the game is drawn by force. It was better to keep up the pressure and play 19...dxe5 20 f3 ♗d4 21 ♗e1 ♖d7 22 ♗b3 ♗e8 when Black keeps a slight edge.

20 exd6+ cxd6 21 ♜e3+ ♖f8 22 ♗g4 ♜f4 ½-½

After 23 ♜xf4+ ♗xf4 24 ♗gf1 the endgame is equal.

Game 35

Braunsdorf-Augustat

Correspondence 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♖e7 6 ♗b3 ♗f8 7 0-0 d6

7...h6!? 8 ♖f3 d6 is again interesting, and now:

a) 9 h3? ♖xe4 10 c3 ♖xf2 11 ♗xf2 ♗xf2+ 12 ♖xf2 ♗xh3! (a novel idea) 13 gxh3 e4 14

♖e1 ♜xf3+ 15 ♜g2 d5 and Black has a clear advantage.

b) 9 d4? ♠xd4 10 ♠xd4 ♙xd4 11 c3 ♙b6 and Black is slightly better.

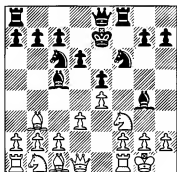
c) 9 d3 ♙g4 10 ♙c3 ♠h5 and Black has the initiative as in many similar positions in the Traxler.

8 d3

8 ♠c3 ♖e8 transposes to Game 36.

8...♙g4 9 ♠f3 ♖e8?!

A standard plan which gives Black some practical compensation. Nevertheless 9...♠d4 was better as in Game 34.



10 c3?!

Both alternatives in this position were stronger:

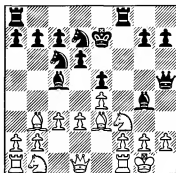
a) 10 h3 ♙xf3 (if 10...♙h5?! 11 c3 h6 12 ♙c3 ♙xe3 13 fxe3 g5 14 g4 ♙g6 15 ♠bd2 with a clear advantage to White) 11 ♜xf3 ♖g6 12 ♖f5! ♜xf5 13 exf5 ♠d4 14 ♙c3 ♠d7 15 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 16 c3 ♙b6 17 g4 and White is slightly better.

b) 10 ♙e3! ♙h5 11 ♠bd2 ♠d4 (if 11...♙xe3?! 12 fxe3 ♖h6 13 ♖e2 ♙h5 14 c3 g5 15 d4! – against a flank attack we should always pay attention to the counter-blows in the centre) 12 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 13 c3 ♙b6 14 ♖e2! (not 14 h3? ♙xh3 15 gxxh3 ♜xh3 16 ♠h2 ♜xd3 17 ♙c4 ♖g3+ 18 ♙h1 ♙xf2 19 ♖e2 ♙b6 with good play for Black in Baer-Leisebein, corr. 1997) 14...♖g6 15 ♙d1 and White is much better.

10...♖h5 11 ♙e3

If 11 ♠bd2 g5! 12 h3 ♙xh3 13 gxxh3 ♜xh3 14 d4 exd4 15 ♠xg5 ♙g8 16 ♙xg8 ♙xg8 17 ♠df3 dxc3 18 ♖b3 ♠e5 19 ♠xe5 ♖g3+ 20 ♙h1 ♖h4+ with a draw – De Zeeuw.

11...♠d7!



A risky move, and according to De Zeeuw it is a mistake, though in my opinion Black has sufficient resources. Also possible is 11...♙xf3! 12 ♜xf3 (not 12 gxf3? ♙xe3 13 fxe3 ♖g5+ 14 ♙h1 ♖xe3 with a huge advantage for Black) 12...♠g4 13 ♖g3 ♙xe3! 14 fxe3 ♜xf1+! (or 14...♜xh2+ 15 ♜xh2 ♜xf1+ 16 ♙xf1 ♠xh2+ with equality – De Zeeuw) 15 ♙xf1 ♙f8+ 16 ♙g1 ♠xh2 (not 16...♖h6? 17 ♠a3 and White consolidates) 17 ♠d2 ♠g4 18 ♙d1 ♖g5 19 ♙xg4 h5 20 ♙f1 hxg4 with an equal endgame.

12 ♠bd2 ♜xf3!?

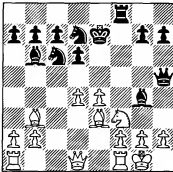
If 12...♙xe3 13 fxe3 ♙f6 14 ♙d5 ♖h6 15 ♖e2 ♙a8 and it is hard to find compensation here.

13 ♠xf3 ♙f8 14 d4!

A standard reaction. If 14 ♖d2? ♜xf3 15 ♙g5+ ♙e8 16 gxxf3 ♙xf3 and Black wins, e.g. 17 ♙e6 ♠f8 18 ♙c8 ♠d7! and White is mated.

14...exd4 15 cxd4 ♙b6

Demonstrating remarkable restraint. After 15...♜xf3?! 16 dxc5! ♙xe3 17 ♖d5 ♜xb3 18 cxd6+ cxd6 19 ♜xb3 ♠d4 20 ♖d5 ♠e2+ 21 ♙h1 ♖xd5 22 exd5 ♠f4 the endgame is very unclear.



16 ♗h1?

16 ♗c4! was the best move and then 16...♗xf3! (not 16...♗xf3? 17 ♗c2 ♗f4 18 f3 and White consolidates) 17 gxf3 ♗f6 18 ♗h1! (if 18 ♗e1 ♗xd4 19 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 20 ♗xd4 ♗h3 21 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 22 ♗c3 ♖e5 23 ♗e2 ♖g6 24 f4 ♗h4 25 f5 ♖f4 and the black initiative is very dangerous, or 18 f4 ♗h3 19 f5 ♗xd4 20 f3 ♗h6 21 ♗f2 ♖xf5 22 ♗xh6 ♗xf2+ 23 ♗xf2 ♗xh2+ 24 ♗e1 ♗xh6 25 exf5 ♗h4+ 26 ♗f1 ♗xc4+ and Black is much better) 18...♗xd4 19 ♗g1 ♖xf3 20 ♗xg7+ ♗d8 21 ♗g8+ ♗e7 22 ♗g7+ with a draw. Also possible was 16 ♗d3!? ♗xf3 17 ♗d1 ♗xd1 18 ♗fxd1 ♗d8 19 ♗ac1 when the position is unclear.

16...♗xf3 17 gxf3

Sometimes a quick death is preferable to prolonged suffering. And there is no escape since if 17 ♗d2 ♗xd4 18 ♗d1 (or 18 ♗xd4 ♗h3 19 ♗f4 g5 20 ♗f7+ ♗xf7 21 ♗xf7 ♗xd4 22 ♗ac1 ♗xf7 23 f3 ♗h4 24 fxg4+ ♗e6 25 ♗xc7 ♗xg4) 18...♖e5 19 ♗g1 ♖e2 20 ♗xe2 ♗xc3 21 fxg3 ♗xe2 and Black wins. 17...♗xf3+ 18 ♗xf3 ♗xf3+ 0-1

Game 36
Howell-Al.David
Groningen 1995

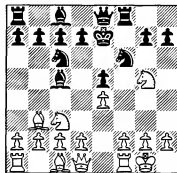
1 e4 ♖c6 2 ♖f3 e5 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 ♖g5 ♗c5 5 ♗xf7+ ♗e7 6 ♗b3 ♗e8!

Usually this is just a different move order

to 6...♗f8 positions and ending in the same place.

One independent line is 7 d3 ♖d4!? (not 7...♗g6? 8 ♗f7 ♗h6 9 ♖f3 and wins, while 7...♗f8 would reach the notes to Game 33) 8 ♗c3 ♗g6 (8...♗f8 9 0-0 d6 10 ♖f3 ♗g4 is Game 34) 9 ♗f7 ♗h6 (threatening 10...♖xc2+ followed by ...♗xe3 and ...♗xg5) but after 10...♖d2! White has a clear advantage, e.g. 10...♖g4 11 ♖e6! ♖xf2 12 ♗xh6 ♖xd1 13 ♗xg7.

7 0-0 ♗f8 8 ♖c3



The principal line.

8...d6

This position can also arise via 6 ♗b3 ♗f8 7 0-0 d6 8 ♖c3 ♗e8.

9 ♖d5+ ♗d8

After 9...♖xd5?! 10 exd5 ♖d4 11 c3 ♖xb3 12 axb3 h6 13 d4 ♗b6 14 ♖e6! ♗xe6 15 dxe6 ♗xe6 16 dxe5 dxe5 17 ♗e3 White is much better according to Pálkövi.

10 c3 h6

10...♗g6? 11 d4! exd4 12 ♖f4 ♗e8 13 ♖ge6+ and White wins.

11 d4

On 11 ♖xf6?! ♗xf6 12 d4 ♗b6 Black has compensation for the material according to Howell.

11...exd4 12 ♖xf6

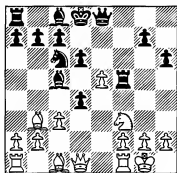
This is stronger than 12 e5 ♖xd5 (12...♗g4?! 13 ♖xf6 gxf6 14 ♖f7+ ♗xf7 15 ♗xg4 ♖xe5 16 ♗c4 ♗g7 17 cxd4 ♗xd4 18 ♗xb7 left White much better in Winkel-

mann-Koch, corr. 1971) 13 ♙xd5 dxc5 14 ♜e4 ♙b6 15 cxd4 ♜xd4 16 ♙e3 c6 17 ♙c4 ♜g6 was given as unclear by Howell. In my opinion White does not have enough compensation here; e.g. 18 ♜g3 ♙e6 19 ♙xe6 ♜xe6 20 ♙c1 ♜g6 21 ♜e2 c5 22 ♙c1 ♜f7 23 ♜g3 ♙d7 24 ♜e4 ♙c8 and Black is better.

12...♙xf6 13 e5 ♙f5

If 13...♙f8 14 exd6 hxg5 15 ♙xg5+ ♜f6 16 ♙xf6+ gxh6 17 dxc7+ ♜xc7 18 ♙c1 and White is better – Howell.

14 ♜f3



14...♜xe5

Black could also consider:

a) 14... dxe5 15 ♙c2 ♙h5! with an interesting mess. If instead 15... ♙f6 16 b4 ♙b6 17 b5 and White is slightly better according to Howell.

b) 14... dxc3 15 exd6 ♙xd6 16 bxc3 ♜h5 17 ♙a3 ♜f6 and a draw was agreed in Leisebein-Schüler, corr. 1998.

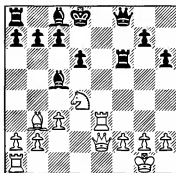
15 ♜xd4 ♙f6 16 ♙e3 ♜g4

Also interesting was 16... ♜f8! ? when after 17 ♜h1 ♜g4 18 ♜c2 d5 19 ♜f3 c6 20 ♙xc5 ♜xc5 21 ♙ae1 ♙d7 (not 21... ♙c6! ? 22 ♜d2 ♙xe1 23 ♜xe1 ♜f6 24 ♜e5 and White is better) 22 h3 ♙e6 23 ♜c2 ♙e1 24 ♜xc1 ♜f6 25 ♜g6 ♜c7 26 ♜d3 ♜e4 Black is OK.

17 ♙e1 ♜xe3?

This exchange is meaningless as White quickly develops his remaining forces. Better was the active 17... ♜e5! when after 18 ♜f3 ♜xe3 19 ♙xe3 ♜f4 20 ♙e1 ♙f8 21 ♜c2 ♜f6 22 ♙ad1 ♙g4 23 ♙d3 c6 24 ♜e5 ♜xe5 25 ♙xe5 the position is more or less equal.

18 ♙xe3 ♜f8 19 ♜e2!



The tripling of the heavy forces on the e-file assures White of a solid advantage.

19...c6 20 ♙e1 ♙d7 21 ♙e6 ♙xd4 22 cxd4 ♙xe6 23 ♙xe6 ♙xe6 24 ♜xe6 ♙c8 25 ♙e3 ♜c7?

Better was 25... d5 , although after 26 ♙a3 White has a huge advantage.

26 ♙f3 1-0

Summary

Traxler's 4...♖c5 can perhaps only be refuted in the solid variation 5 ♖xf7+ ♔e7 6 ♖b3 ♞f8 7 d3. In my opinion Black has sufficient compensation after 7...h6!, but practical testing is obviously required. The Traxler is a good line for amateurs and club players and Black scores well after both 5 ♘xf7 and 5 d4. There are of course more pressing problems with 4...♖c5 5 ♖xf7+ than after 4...d5, but this is the high risk life. That a player such as Beliavsky has played 4...♖c5 a few times does not necessarily guarantee that it is completely sound, but it means at least that he thinks it gives him adequate chances as a surprise weapon, even against Karpov.

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 ♖c5 5 ♖xf7+

5 d4 – *Game 25*

5 ♘xf7 ♖xf2+ (D)

6 ♔xf2 – *Game 26*

6 ♔f1 – *Game 27*

5...♔e7 (D) 6 ♖b3

6 ♖d5

6...d6

7 c3 – *Game 31*; 7 d3 – *Game 32*

6...♞f8

7 ♖xc6 – *Game 28*

7 0-0 d6

8 c3 – *Game 29*; 8 h3 – *Game 30*

6...♞f8 7 d3

7 0-0 d6

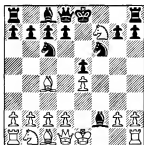
8 d3 – 7 d3; 8 ♘c3 ♔c8 – *Game 36*

7...d6 8 0-0

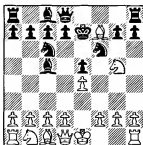
8 ♖c3 – *Game 33*

8...♖g4 9 ♘f3 (D)

9...♘d4 – *Game 34*; 9...♔e8 – *Game 35*



5...♖xf2+



5...♔e7



9 ♘f3

CHAPTER SIX

4 d4 exd4: Introduction



1 e4 e5 2 d4 exd4

In this chapter we deal with the position after 4 d4 exd4 – in particular, the variations following 5 e5 where Black avoids the immediate counter 5...d5 (which is covered in Chapter 7). As you will see below there is no reason to disregard either 5...c4 (Games 38 & 39) or 5...g4 (Games 40-42); both are perfectly playable moves without existing refutations. At lower levels 5...g4 might prove especially effective as many players might be tempted to play 6 fxf7+, but as shall be revealed in the notes to Game 40 this is not sound at all. Apart from 5 e5 and 5 0-0 (the subject of Chapter 8) White has another, weaker possibility, 5 g5?, as seen in Game 37.

Game 37

Bucan-Geller

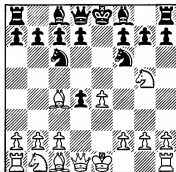
Bad Wörishofen 1992

1 e4 e5 2 c4 f6 3 d4 exd4 4 f3 c6

After a common alternative move order we have arrived at the starting position for this chapter. It should be said that 4...xc4 is perfectly possible, but that belongs to the 2 c4 system and not this book. Another

common move order is 2 f3 c6 3 d4 exd4 4 c4 f6, though there Black can also consider 4...c5.

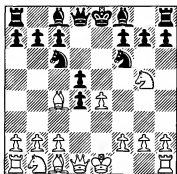
5 g5?!



On the package from the variation manufacturer it says: 'Please note that this should only be used in games with a fast time control. In classical games, the use of this move may lead to serious injuries, and should be ventured only at the customers own risk.' Why? Well, White is breaking one of the main rules of the opening by playing f3-g5 so soon. He is attacking before finishing development, when the advised behaviour is the other way round. And while there was an argument for discounting that rule in the case of 4 g5 due to Black's vulnerability at f7,

here there is little difficulty in defending that square.

5...d5!



The voice of Wilhelm Steinitz speaks clearly from heaven above: 'Against an attack on the flanks, you must counter-attack in centre!' Of course it is not always so simple, but here it is.

The alternative, 5...e5, is not as good, especially because by playing this move Black also violates general principles, and instead of developing the pieces he makes a second knight move as well. White then has:

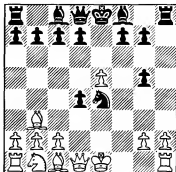
a) 6 ♖xd4 ♜xc4 7 ♖xc4 d5 8 exd5 ♖xd5 9 ♖e2+ ♙e7 10 0-0 and here Black should play very carefully in order to keep the balance:

a1) 10...♙g4? 11 f3 h6? 12 ♜c3 ♖c6 13 fxg4 hxg5 14 ♙xg5 and White is clearly better, while if 11...♙f5 12 ♜c3 ♖c6 13 ♙f4 and White has a dangerous initiative – usually you have to sacrifice a pawn or two to get to this kind of position; here White has sacrificed nothing.

a2) 10...♙d7! is correct, when White must be content with an equal game after 11 ♜c3 ♖c5 12 ♙e3 ♖f5. Instead 11 ♙e1? allows 11...0-0! 12 ♖xe7 (if 12 ♜xh7? ♜xh7 13 ♖xe7 ♙c6 14 f3 ♙fc8 15 ♖b4 ♙xe1+ 16 ♖xe1 ♙e8 17 ♙e3 ♖e5 18 ♜f2 ♜g5! and the question is not if, but when) 12...♙ac8 13 ♖b4 ♖c5 14 ♙d2 ♙xe1+ 15 ♙xe1 ♖xg5 16 ♙d2 (if 16 ♙d2 ♙c6 17 f3 ♙d8 or 17...♙e8!?

with a very strong initiative) 16...♖d5! and Black is better, perhaps a lot better, as White has big problems with his development.

b) 6 ♙b3 (more dangerous) 6...h6 7 f4 hxg5 8 fxe5 ♜xe4 and then:



b1) 9 ♖xd4 ♜c5 is harmless, 9...♜c5 10 ♜c3 d6 11 ♙e3 ♜xb3 12 axb3 dxe5 13 ♖xc5+ ♖e7 14 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 15 ♙xg5 ♙d7 and Black was slightly better in Pflieger-Spassky, Hastings 1965/66.

b2) 9 ♙d5!? is an old (13 years old anyway) idea of by Jurij Zezulkin, a present day grandmaster. It leads to a very unclear game, and is another good reason not to play 5...e5. The best response is 9...f5! (that the line is dangerous is shown by 9...♙b4+? 10 c3 dxc3 11 bxc3 ♜xc3 12 ♙xf7+ ♜f8 13 ♖b3 with a strong attack in Zezulkin-Kalesnik, Minsk 1990, while if 9...♖e7 10 ♙xe4 ♖xe5 11 ♖e2 Black's three pawns are not enough for the knight in my opinion) 10 exf6 ♜xf6 11 ♖d3 ♖e7+ 12 ♜d1 ♜d8 13 ♙xg5 ♖e5 14 ♖g6 c6 with an unclear position in Watson-Adams, English Championship 1991.

6 exd5 ♖e7+!

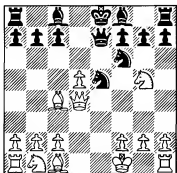
This is the downside to White's attacking plan. There is no sensible way to defend against this check.

7 ♜f1

This is the only move. If 7 ♜d2? ♖b4+ wins, or 7 ♖e2 ♖xc2+ 8 ♜xc2 ♜b4 9 ♙b5+ ♙d7 10 ♙xd7+ ♜xd7 and Black wins a

pawn with no hint of serious compensation for White.

7...♖e5 8 ♖xd4



8...h6

This is simply a matter of move order. Black can also take the bishop immediately with 8...♖xc4 9 ♖xc4 and then:

a) 9...♖c5 10 ♖xc5 (if 10 ♖e2+ ♖e7 11 c4 ♖xd5 12 ♖e4 ♖c6 13 ♖g5 ♖f6 14 ♖xf6+ gxf6 and Black is at least slightly better) 10...♖xc5 11 ♖c3 ♖f5 12 ♖f4 0-0 with sufficient compensation for the pawn.

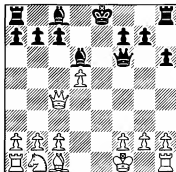
b) 9...h6! 10 ♖c3 (if 10 ♖f3 ♖c5 11 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 12 c4 ♖f5 and Black has more than enough compensation for the pawn) 10...hxg5 11 ♖xg5 ♖c5 12 ♖c1+ ♖d8 13 ♖f4 (if 13 ♖c2 ♖d7 14 ♖c4 ♖b5! 15 ♖xf6+ gxf6 16 ♖xc5 ♖xe2+ 17 ♖xe2 ♖xc5 and Black wins) 13...♖e7 14 h4 and now 14...♖d7?! 15 h5 ♖c8 16 ♖h4 ♖d6 17 ♖f3 ♖e8 18 h6 gxh6 19 ♖xh6 f5 was played in Carleton-Franzen, corr. 1991-93. Franzen believes that this position is slightly better for Black, and as he spent two years playing this game, possibly he is right. Nevertheless Black can play more strongly by bringing the a8-rook into the game after 14...a5! 15 ♖e5 ♖a6 with a clear, possibly even decisive advantage. Many chess players forget that the rook can also develop forwards and not just to the side.

9 ♖e4

9 ♖c3 ♖xc4 10 ♖xc4 transposes to

8...♖xc4 9 ♖xc4 h6 above.

9...♖xc4 10 ♖xf6+ ♖xf6 11 ♖xc4 ♖d6

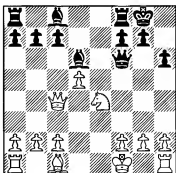


12 ♖c3?

White allows Black to develop effortlessly. Much better was 12 ♖e2+ ♖e7 13 ♖c3 0-0 where Black merely has very good compensation for the pawn.

12...0-0 13 ♖e4?

White hopes to ease his defence through exchanges, but trading the knight on d6 will leave Black with a deadly attack enhanced by the opposite-coloured bishops, as White will have nothing to resist him on the light squares. Preferable was 13 ♖e3 ♖f5 14 ♖c1 ♖fe8 15 ♖g1 and although Black is much better, White still has some chances to survive.



13...♖g6 14 ♖xd6 cxd6 15 ♖f4 ♖f5

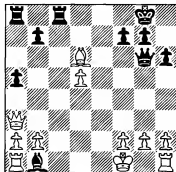
With the king's rook boxed in on the h1-square, White is virtually playing a rook

down.

16 ♖b4 ♗xc2 17 ♗xd6 a5 18 ♖c5

Or 18 ♖f4 ♗fd8 19 ♗c7 ♗xd5 and White can only wait for the end.

18...♗fc8 19 ♖a3 ♗b1!



Now the second white rook is set out of play too. The game is virtually over. One cannot defend playing two rooks down.

20 ♗f4 ♗c4 21 ♖g3 ♖d3+

There is no reason to make it difficult. This is more than good enough to finish off the game immediately.

22 ♖xd3 ♗xd3+ 23 ♖e1 ♗xf4 24 ♖d2 ♗d4 0-1

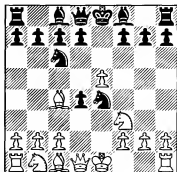
Game 38
V. Gurevich-Jonkman
Germany 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♗c4 ♗f6 5 e5

This has been the modern way of handling the position since the classical lines with 5 0-0 were exhaustively investigated. Black now has three options: 5...♗g4!? (Games 40-42), 5...d5 (the main line covered in Chapter 7) and the text.

5...♗e4!?

This move, like many others, has been a victim of fashion – unfairly, as it gives Black a good game. Of strong grandmasters only Romanishin and Mikhalchishin have played it with any regularity.

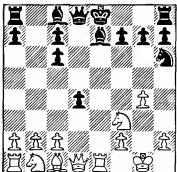


6 ♖e2

The main move 6 ♗d5 is considered in Game 39. White can also play 6 0-0 with two possibilities:

a) 6...♗e7? 7 ♗xd4?! (7 ♖e1 d5 8 exd6 ♗xd6 9 ♗d5 ♗f5 transposes to 6...d5) 7...♗xe5 8 ♗f5 ♗f6 9 ♗d5 ♗xc4 10 ♖xe4+ ♗e5 11 f4 d5 12 ♖e1 ♗xf5 13 fxe5 ♗h4 14 g3 ♗h3 15 gxh4 ♗xf1 16 ♖xf1 ♖d7 and the Hungarian IM József Pálkövi, who found this line, reckons that both players have chances. In my opinion Black is clearly better as White has ongoing problems with the safety of his king.

b) 6...d5 7 exd6 (7 ♗b5 transposes to the 5...d5 main line in Chapter 7) 7...♗xd6 8 ♗d5 ♗f5 9 ♖e1+ ♗e7 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 g4 ♗h6 and now:



b1) 12 ♖xd4 ♗xg4 13 ♗xh6 ♖xd4! (inferior is 13...♗xf3?! 14 ♖xg7 ♖d7 15 ♖f1!

when 15...♖g8? loses to 16 ♜xc7+! ♜xc7 17 ♖e5+ ♜d7 18 ♖f5+, while after the forced 15...♔d5 16 ♖c3 ♜c4+ 17 ♖c2 ♔d6 18 ♖d4 ♔e6 19 ♖g3 White is simply better) 14 ♖xd4 gxf6 15 ♖xc6 ♔e6 16 ♖xc7 ♜xc7 17 ♖c3 ♜hg8+ and Black has good attacking chances to compensate for his ruined pawn structure.

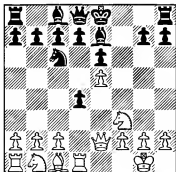
b2) 12 ♔xh6 gxf6 13 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♜f8 15 ♖xc6 ♔f6 16 ♖c3 ♜xc3 17 bxc3 ♔xg4 and Black is slightly better.

b3) 12 ♔g5 ♔c6 13 ♔xc7 ♖xc7 14 ♖xd4 ♖xg4 15 ♖c3 ♖h6 16 ♖e5 0-0 17 ♖xc6 ♖g5+ was Sveshnikov-Smikovski, Togliatti 2003, and for a position like this for Black one pawn is a very small price.

6...♖c5 7 0-0 ♔e7

Simple and good. Also interesting is 7...♖e6 8 ♔d1 (if 8 ♔xc6 dxc6 9 ♔d1 ♔c5 10 c3 ♔b6 11 ♔e3 ♖c7! 12 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♔d7 with complete equality) 8...d5 9 ♔b5 ♔c5 10 c3 ♔d7 11 ♔xc6 ♔xc6 12 cxd4 ♔b6 13 ♖c3 0-0 and both players have their chances according to Mikhalchishin.

8 ♔d1 ♖e6 9 ♔xe6 fxe6!



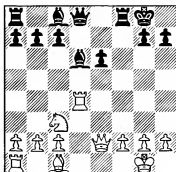
Very logical, but this was still a novelty. Instead after 9...dxc6 10 ♔c3 0-0 11 ♖xd4 White has some advantage, e.g. 11...♖d5 12 f4 ♖xd4 13 ♔xd4 ♖c6 14 ♖c3 and Black still has difficulty in developing.

10 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 11 ♔xd4 0-0 12 ♖c3 d5 13 exd6

Otherwise Black takes over the centre.

13...♔xd6

Black has no worries about accepting an isolated pawn, as he is quite active here.



14 ♔e3 e5 15 ♔d2 ♖e8 16 ♖e4 ♖g6 17 f3 ♔f5 18 ♔ad1 ♔xe4 19 ♖c4+ ♖f7 20 ♖xf7+ ♜xf7 21 fxe4 ½-½

Game 39

Kozakov-Jonkman

L'ov 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♔c4 ♖f6 5 e5 ♖e4!?

Too risky is 6...♔b4+?! 7 c3! dxc3 8 0-0! and White has terrific compensation.

7 ♔xc6?!

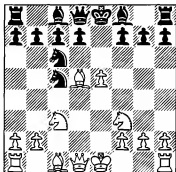
After this Black obtains the two bishops and at least two moves for free. The alternatives were:

a) 7 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 8 ♖xd4 ♖e6 9 ♖c3 d6 10 0-0 dxc5 11 ♖xe5 ♔d6 12 ♖h5 0-0 with equality.

b) 7 0-0 ♔e7 8 ♖e2 (other moves also lead to equality, e.g. 8 ♔e1 0-0 9 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 10 ♖xd4 d6 11 ♖c3 ♖e6 12 ♖e4 c6 13 exd6 ♔xd6, or 8 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 9 ♖xd4 0-0 10 ♖c3 c6 11 ♔f3 d6, or 8 ♖bd2 ♖e6 9 ♖b3 0-0 10 ♔c1 ♖b4 and Black is at least equal) 8...0-0 9 ♔d1 ♖e8 10 ♖a3 (not 10 ♔f4?! b6! 11 ♔xc6 d3! 12 cxd3 dxc6 13 d4 ♖e6 14 ♔g3 ♔b7 15 ♖c3 ♔d8 and in Khmel'nitsky-Romanishin, Sibenik 1990, Black had the advantage with his two bishops and control of the light

squares) 10...♖b4 11 ♔c4 d3 12 cxd3 d5 13 exd6 ♔xd6 14 ♖xe8 ♗xe8 15 ♖b5 ♔g4 was equal in Khmelnitsky-Malaniuk, Sibenik 1990.

c) 7 c3!? is the dangerous move, but it is unlikely to take any 5...♗c4 players by surprise. After 7...dxc3 8 ♖xc3 Black has:

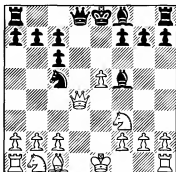


c1) 8...♗e7 9 ♔e3 0-0 10 ♖e2 ♖b4 11 0-0-0 c6 12 ♔xc5 ♔xc5 13 ♔b3 d5 14 a3 ♖a6 15 h4 b5 16 ♗g5 b4 (it looks as if White will cross the finish line in second place) 17 ♔c2 g6 18 axb4 ♖xb4 19 ♔b1 was Hector-Nunn, Vejle 1994. In my opinion Black's attack is the stronger here, although playing such a position is akin to strolling around in a minefield – for both sides of course. Now Nunn continued 19...♗b8, but I prefer 19...♗b6 with good play.

c2) 8...♖b4!? (a new and untested idea, designed for those who hate defending – Black wants to use the weakness of the d3-square to his advantage) 9 ♔c4 (after 9 0-0 ♖xd5 10 ♖xd5 ♔e7 11 ♔c3 ♗e6 and Black's position looks bullet-proof, e.g. 12 ♖b5 a6 13 ♖a7 c6 14 ♖b3 b5 and there is no reason why White should be better; more likely he is just a pawn down) 9...d5 10 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 11 ♔xd5 ♔e6 12 ♔xc6 ♖xd1+ 13 ♖xd1 ♖xc6 14 ♔e2 ♔e7 with a comfortable endgame for Black. The knight on e6 has strong control over the centre and White has no easy way of removing it. If allowed Black will play ...c7-c5 and ...♔d7-c6 in hope of utilising his queen-

side majority.

7...dxc6 8 ♖xd4 ♔f5



Black already has the more comfortable development.

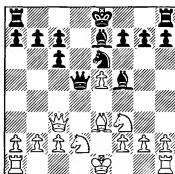
9 ♖c3

9 ♔g5 is solidly met by 9...♖c8 10 ♖a3 ♖c6 11 ♖c3 ♔c5 (11...♔xa3?! 12 ♖xa3! ♖xg5 13 ♖xg5 ♔xc2 wins a pawn, but White has reasonable counterplay here as Black has difficulties getting the rest of his pieces into the game) 12 ♔h4 0-0 and it seems that Black has a slight advantage due to his better placed pieces and two bishops.

9...♖e6 10 ♔e3 ♖d5!

I prefer Black here, whose control over the light squares is very important.

11 ♖bd2 ♔e7



12 a3!?

White is preparing to castle queenside, but this is a misunderstanding of the position.

Better was 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♘b3, with reasonable chances to equalise.

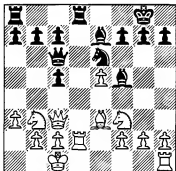
12...0-0 13 0-0-0 c5!

Black takes control over d4, preventing the manoeuvre ♘d2-b3-d4.

13...♖a2? surely looks attractive, but after 14 ♖b3 ♖a1+ (14...♖xb3 15 ♘xb3 is roughly equal), 15 ♘b1 in reality all Black has done is risk losing the queen, though there are no guarantees of course.

14 ♘b3 ♖c6 15 ♚d2 ♚fd8!

In a position where you have the advantage and will win 'if nothing happens', it is usually important to prevent counterplay. Here Black exchanges a pair of rooks and thereby decreases the significance of the open d-file. Had he not done so, he would have to consider exchanging all the rooks markedly lessening his attacking chances, or else allow White to penetrate at some point.



16 ♚hd1 ♚xd2 17 ♚xd2 a5

Here comes the attack.

18 ♘xa5

This does not look sound, but White is in a pretty bad fix. If 18 ♚d1 a4 19 ♘bd2 b5 and Black's attack is easy to play and remarkably strong.

18...♖a6 19 ♘b3 ♖f1+ 20 ♚d1 ♖xg2 21 ♘e1 ♖c6

The c5-pawn is preventing all White's counterplay and is therefore far more important than the pawn on h2. The exchange of a-pawn for g-pawn, however, benefits Black

as White now has no control at all over the light squares in his position.

22 ♘d2 ♚d8

What Black is trying to achieve here is not clear. Perhaps it is simply that Jonkman is very fond of the endgame and has a tendency to seek it for no better reason than that it is possible. Of course he has a great understanding of the endgame to assist him, once he makes it there. Personally I prefer 22...b5! (my hand will often make attacking moves like this without consulting me about central control); after 23 ♘b3 b4 24 axb4 c4 the target is set and Black will probably win by direct attack.

23 ♘f1 ♚xd1+ 24 ♖xd1 ♚g4+ 25 ♖c1 ♖d5

Black centralises and exchanges into a clearly superior endgame.

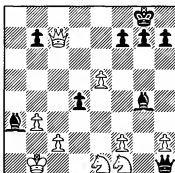
26 b3?

This creates a new weakness at a3, which becomes immediately apparent after Black's next move.

26...♘d4!

Now there is no defence. Both ...♘e2+ and ...♖xe5 are threatened.

27 ♚xd4 cxd4 28 ♖xc7 ♚xa3+ 29 ♖b1 ♖h1!

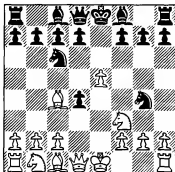


Rarely has the difference between bishops and knights been so clearly exhibited as in this position.

30 ♖c4 ♚h3 31 e6 fxe6 32 b4 ♖xf1 33 ♖c8+ ♖f7 34 ♖d7+ ♚g6 0-1

Game 40
Borge-Hector
Copenhagen 1994

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 d4 c4 4 d4
 exd4 5 e5 d4!



The second ugly sister to the beautiful 5...d5. As with 5...c4, this move is not openly attractive, but it has a good character indeed.

6 We2

White wants to prevent ...d7-d6 and protect his e-pawn at the same time. The alternative, 6 0-0, is considered in Game 42.

A famous mistake is 6 dxf7? cxf7 7 d5+ c8! 8 Wxg4 (8 Wf3? b4+! 9 c3 d5xe5 10 Wd5+ c8 is even worse: if 11 0-0 We7 12 cxb4 dxb4 or 11 cxb4 dxb4! and Black wins) 8...h6 9 f3 d6 10 Wg3 (10 We4? dxe5 11 dxe5 We8! wins by force after 12 f4 d6 13 0-0 dxe5 14 e1 f5 15 Wd5+ Wf7 16 Wxb7 e8 17 fxe5 e4! and everything is as clear as can be) 10...We8! 11 0-0 dxe5 12 e1 f5 and Black is much better.

6...We7 7 d4 f6

7...d6 is examined in Game 41.

8 exf6 gxf6!

The idea behind this move is simple – Black wants to build a blockade on the e5-square.

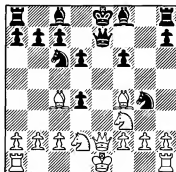
Also acceptable is 8...dxf6 9 d4bd2 (if 9

dxc7 d6 10 b5 d7 11 dxc6 We2+ 12 cxc6 dxc6 and Black is no worse; his next moves are ...d7 and ...e8+ which can be hard to meet for White) 9...We2+ (also interesting is 9...d5 10 b5 We2+ 11 cxe2 a6! 12 dxc6+ bxc6 13 dxc7 g4 14 e5 c5 15 e1 and the game is unclear) 10 cxe2 d5 (the safest option; after 10...d6 11 e1 f5 12 f1+ d7 13 d3 dxc2 14 dxd4 dxd4 15 dxd4 g6 16 e6+ d8 17 d3 h3 White has compensation for the material according to Sveshnikov) 11 e1 d5 12 f1+ d8 13 d3 d4 14 d3 b6 15 dxd4 dxd3 16 cxd3 d7 with an equal position. Sveshnikov-Ehlvest, Helsinki 1992, continued 17 d5 c8 18 a1 c8 19 d6 c6 20 h3 dh5 21 h2 dxe6 22 dxe6 d7 23 c5+ dxc5 24 e8 the players agreed a draw.

9 d4bd2

9 0-0 We2 10 dxe2 d5e5 11 d4bd2 d6 12 g3 dxf3+ 13 dxf3 d3g3 14 fxg3 d6 was equal in Tzermadianos-Socko, Istanbul 2003.

9...d6



10 d4bd3

White needs to do something to get an active game. After 10 We7+? cxe7! (better than 10...dxe7! 11 b5! when White has some initiative, although Black is probably still OK) 11 0-0 d5e5 12 e1 d8 and it is not so easy for White to prove compensation for the pawn.

10...♖ce5

Also fine is 10...♞xe2+ 11 ♔xe2 d3! 12 cxd3 (12 ♔xd3 ♖b4 and Black will gain the two bishops, which may eventually be a decisive factor) 12...♗h6 13 ♔xh6 ♖xh6 14 h3 ♔d7 15 g4 0-0-0 with full equality in Zelcic-Mikhalechishin, Nova Gorica 2002.

11 0-0 ♖xc4 12 ♞xc4 ♖e5

The blockade on e5 has certainly proved itself useful.

13 ♞xd4 ♔g7

13...♖xf3+? is interesting, if rather inconsistent. After 14 gxf3 ♔g8+ 15 ♖h1 ♞f7 (not 15...♔h3? 16 ♞fe1 ♔g2+ 17 ♖g1 ♔h3+ 18 ♔g3 and White wins) 16 ♔g1 ♞xg1+ 17 ♞xg1 it will be difficult for the black king ever to find safety. So Black's choice in the game is understandable. Still, you have to take some risks sometimes.

14 ♞c3?!

On c3 the queen faces unemployment. 14 ♞e3 looks better and then: 14...0-0 15 ♞fe1 ♞f7 16 ♖bd4 ♔d7 17 ♖h4!? (Myrvold-Karpachev, Gausdal 1993, saw 17 a4?! which is hard to understand – moves like these just creates weaknesses; after 17...a6 18 ♖d2 ♞fe8 19 ♞b3 ♖g6 20 ♔c3 f5! Black was already slightly better) 17...f5 18 ♞g3 ♖h8 19 ♖hf3 ♖xf3+ 20 ♖xf3 and White is better here, since if 20...♔xb2 21 ♖g5 ♞g8 22 ♞ab1 ♞ae8 23 ♞xe8 ♞xe8 24 h3 and after 25 ♞xb7 Black will surely regret his actions. An important point here of course is that 24...♞xa2? fails to 25 ♞xb2 ♞xb2 26 ♖f7 mate.

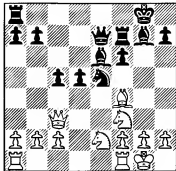
14...0-0 15 ♖bd4?

This looks natural but is a very bad move! The knight was better on b3 than it will be on e2. 15 ♞fe1 was more logical, as the rook had yet to join the game. After 15...b6! 16 ♞c3 ♔b7 17 ♞ae1 ♞f7 the two bishops and a more clear plan ensure some advantage for Black.

15...c5 16 ♞b3+?!

This is an excellent illustration of what can happen when you play without a plan. White

should focus on stopping the black pawns, bite his lip and put the knight back on b3, although Black is still better after 16 ♖b3 b6 17 ♞fe1 ♔b7 18 ♖h4 f5 19 ♞g3 ♞f6 20 ♞ad1 ♞ac8.

16...♞f7 17 ♖e2 ♔e6 18 ♞c3 d5

Black stands much better now. White has nothing with which to resist the pawns.

19 ♖h4 d4 20 ♞g3 ♖h8 21 ♔c1?

White wants to bring the knight to f4, but this is not really realistic. 21 ♞fe1 would be better. Of course this is not a honeymoon – Black probably plays 21...♞g8 with an attack – but White is still alive.

21...♞g8

21...♔c4!? also looks strong. After 22 ♞e1 ♞e8 White cannot hold on to his material and his best chance (in view of the threatened 22...♖c6) is to play 23 ♔d2, but after 23...♔xe2 24 ♞xe2 ♖f3+ 25 ♖xf3 ♞xe2 26 ♞e1 ♞b5 there is no real hope. Black has just won the exchange for nothing.

22 ♖f4

The first time I saw this game I half expected White to play ♖h1 and ♖g1.

22...♔h6

From here on Black misplays his position somewhat. Simplest was 22...♔f8! 23 ♞a3 ♔c4 24 ♞d1 f5 25 ♖f3 ♖xf3+ 26 ♞xf3 ♞e4! 27 ♞xe4 fxe4 and the black position is simply overwhelming.

23 ♞a3

The only vacant square.

23...♗g5 24 ♖xe6 ♗xe6 25 ♖f3

White cannot play 25 ♗xg5 fxe5 26 f4 (if 26 ♖f3 ♗xf3! 27 gxf3 ♗h3 is the end) 26...gxf4 27 fxe5 ♗xg2+! 28 ♖xg2 ♗g6+ 29 ♖h1 ♗e4+ 30 ♖g1 ♗g7+ and it is all over Casanova.

25...♗xc1 26 ♖xe5 ♗fg7 27 g3 ♖f4?

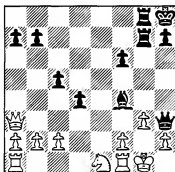
This works out in the game, but actually White can defend his position. Stronger was 27...♗xb2 28 ♗xb2 fxe5 with a clear extra pawn and a continued attack by ...e5-e4-e3.

28 ♖f3 ♗h3

Not 28...♗e2 29 ♗d3 and White is on the way to a preferable endgame!

29 ♖e1??

29 ♖h1! with unclear play was the only move here. Black has no way in on the light squares and will not get any further with the attack now. Black has slightly better chances, as White is still under some pressure, but it is nothing serious.



29...♗e3! 0-1

There is no defence against 30...♗xg3+ and mates.

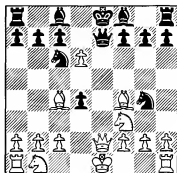
Game 41
Pálkövi-Wells
Zalakaros 1998

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 d4 exd4 5 e5 ♖g4!? 6 ♗e2 ♗e7 7 ♖f4 d6

This is more natural than 7...f6, but also gives Black a weakened central pawn struc-

ture. The advantage of 7...f6 was that the d4-pawn could still be protected with ...c7-c5 eventually.

8 exd6



8...cxd6!

The only move promising reasonable chances for equality. If 8...♗xe2 9 ♗xe2 ♗xd6 10 ♗xd6 cxd6 11 ♖a3! ♗f5 12 ♖b5 and ♖fxd4 gives White the slightly better game. However, Black can try 9...♖b4?! (Adorjan's idea, which creates an amazing mess on the board and, being relatively unknown, is a good weapon for quick games) 10 ♖xd4 (not 10 dxc7? ♖xc2+ 11 ♖d2 ♖xa1 12 ♖b5+ ♗d7 13 ♗e1+ ♗e7 14 ♗d6 ♖e3! 15 fxe3 ♖c2 16 ♖xc2 d3+ 17 ♗xd3 ♗xd6 and Black wins according to Pálkövi) 10...c5!? (wild, and probably unsound, but after 10...♗xd6 Black is slightly worse) 11 ♖b5! ♖xc2+ 12 ♖d2 ♖xa1 13 f3 ♖d7 (but not 13...♖f2? 14 ♗f1 ♖d7 15 ♖c7 ♗xd6 16 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 17 ♖xa8 ♗f5 18 ♖a3 and White wins - Pálkövi) 14 fxe4 a6 15 ♗c1. Supposedly the game is unclear here, but is this really the case? After 15...g5 16 ♗g3 h5 17 gxf5 f5 18 ♗e5 ♗h7 19 ♖c7 it does not look as if Black will survive, while 15...♖c6 is bad because of 16 ♖c7 ♗b8 17 ♗f3+ ♖d7 18 ♗e7+! (improving on Pálkövi's 18 ♖d5?! ♗xd6 19 ♖b6+ ♖c7 20 ♗xd6+ ♖xd6 21 ♖c3 with only a slight advantage) 18...♗xc7 19 dxe7 ♖xe7 20 ♖d5+ ♖e6 21 ♗xb8 ♗d8 22 ♖bc3 b5 23 ♖c1 and White is probably

winning here. Improvements on this analysis are called for the assessment of unclear is to be justified.

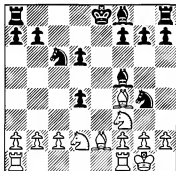
9 Qbd2

After 9 0-0 Qge5! and Black is at least equal; in particular if 10 Qb5 Qg4 11 Qbd2 0-0-0 the real question is if White can hold equality or not. Alternatively 9 Qa3 a6 (less clear is 9... Qge5 10 0-0-0 Qxc4 11 Wxc4 as Black has problems getting his king into safety) 10 Qd1 Wxc2+ 11 Qxc2 Qe6 with an even game.

9... Qf5 10 0-0?!

A very ambitious move; White sacrifices a pawn to unbalance the position. Instead after 10 Qb3 (but not 10 Qb5?! Wxc2+ 11 Qxc2 0-0-0 and Black is better) 10... d3 11 cxd3 (or 11 Qxd3 Qxd3 12 cxd3 Qb4) 11... Wxc2+ 12 Qxc2 Qge5 the position is equal.

10... Wxc2 11 Qxe2



11... $\text{Qge5?!$

Black is being unnecessarily careful. Stronger was 11... Qxc2 12 Qb5 d3! (not 12... Qf5?! 13 Qac1 Qd7 14 Qfe1+ Qd8 15 Qg5 with an attack – Pálkövi) 13 Qfe1+ (or 13 Qd4 Qge5 14 Qac1 Qd8 15 Qxc2 dxc2 16 Qxe5 Qxe5 17 Qxc2 a6 18 Qe2 Qc8 and White has insufficient compensation) 13... Qd7 14 Qc4 Qce5 15 Qxe5+ dxe5 16 Qxe5 Qxe5 17 Qxe5 Qd8! and Black is clearly better.

12 Qb3 d3

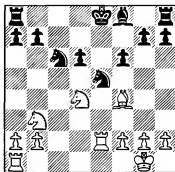
12... $\text{Qxc2?!$ is risky now because of 13

Qbxd4 Qxf3+ 14 Qxf3 Qe7 15 Qac1 Qe4 16 Qfd1 Qd8 17 Qd2! and the white pressure is increasing.

13 cxd3 Qxd3 14 $\text{Qfe1?!$

White is drifting a bit. Stronger was 14 Qxe5! Qxe2 (or 14... Qxe5 15 Qfe1 Qxc2 16 Qxe2 f6 17 Qfd4 Qd7 18 Qd1 g6 19 Qb5 with initiative) 15 Qxg7 Qxf1 16 Qxh8 Qc4 and the position is roughly equal.

14... Qxe2 15 Qxe2 f6 16 Qfd4



16... $\text{Qxd4?!$

This does not really make a lot of sense, as it invites the white knight on b3 back into the game for no reason. After 16...0-0-0! it is hard to prove that White has sufficient compensation. Pálkövi writes in his annotations that White will have enough play, and perhaps that is so, but only enough for a draw! For example, 17 Qc2 (or 17 Qd1 g5 18 Qg3 h5 19 Qe6 Qc8) 17... Qb8 18 Qxe5 Qxe5 19 Qe6 Qc8 20 Qac1 Qe7 21 Qxg7 Qd3 22 Qxc8+ Qxc8 23 Qxc8+ Qxc8 24 Qf5 Qd7 and White has some problems, because after the exchange of b-pawns the white knight will probably find itself in trouble (e.g. 25 Qa5 Qd8 26 Qxb7? Qc7 or 25 Qxe7 Qxe7 26 Qa5 Qxb2 27 Qxb7? Qc4); also Black has a much more active king.

17 Qxd4 Qd7 18 Qd1 Qc8 19 Qg3

Now White has full compensation for the pawn due to his lead in development and pressure on d6.

19... g6

If 19...a6 20 f4 ♖f7 21 ♖f1 and White keeps the pressure.

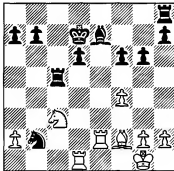
20 ♖b5 ♙c5 21 ♖c3

Temptation is resisted. If 21 ♖xa7? ♙a5 22 f4 ♖g4! (controlling the f2-square; not 22...♖f7? 23 ♖f2) and now after 23 h3 ♙xa7 24 hxg4 ♙xa2 25 f5 ♙g8 26 ♙cd2 gxf5 27 ♙xd6 ♙xd6 28 ♙xd6+ ♖c8 Black has winning chances in the endgame.

21...♙e7 22 f4 ♖c4!

Black plays really well here. If instead 22...♖c6? 23 ♖d5 ♙d8 24 ♖f2 ♙b5 25 ♙ed2 White would have a strong initiative for his pawn.

23 ♙f2 ♖xb2!



Black sacrifices the exchange for two pawns and strong positional compensation.

24 ♙de1 ♙xc3 25 ♙d4 ♙d8 26 ♙xc3 ♖d3 27 ♙f1 ♙b6+ 28 ♖h1 ♙c8 29 ♙b2 f5 30 g3 ♖xb2

After this the game is drawn. My impression is that after 30...♙c4! followed by ...♖c5-e4 Black has winning chances.

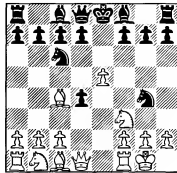
31 ♙xb2 ♙c4 32 ♙d1 ½-½

Black might be microscopically better here, but the result will always be a draw, so the players agreed to it immediately.

Game 42 Plachetka-Smejkal Ostrava 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙c4 ♖f6 4 d4

exd4 5 e5 ♖g4 6 0-0!



A very mean move (in the gunfighter sense). White has already gambited one pawn and definitely hopes to get an advantage in the near future through a direct assault.

6...d6!

6...♖ge5?? 7 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 8 ♙e1 costs a piece.

7 exd6

White has no real worthwhile alternative. If 7 e6? fxc6 8 ♖g5 ♖ge5 9 ♙xe6 h6 10 ♙xc8 ♙xc8 11 ♙h5+ g6 12 ♙h3 ♙d7 13 ♖e6 ♖d8 14 ♖xd4 ♙xh3 15 gxf3 ♙g7 and Black was much better in Borisov-Kuznetsov, USSR 1961. Equally hopeless are 7 ♙e1? ♖ge5 8 ♖xd4 ♙e7 and 7 ♙g5? ♙e7 8 ♙xe7 ♙xe7 9 exd6 ♙xd6 and Black has an extra pawn.

7...♙xd6

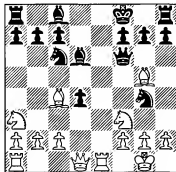
7...♙xd6 has one drawback: White can play 8 ♖a3! a6 9 h3 ♖f6 10 ♖g5 ♖d8 11 ♙c1+ ♙e7 12 ♙c2 ♖e6 and then 13 f4! with the advantage in Sax-Grochakov, Groningen 1971/72.

8 ♙e1+ ♖f8 9 ♖a3 ♙f6

Not 9...♖ce5? 10 h3! ♖xf3+ 11 ♙xf3 ♖f6 12 ♖b5 and Black is in difficulties.

10 ♙g5!?

This gives Black a chance to go wrong. After 10 ♙e2 ♙d7 11 ♙g5 ♙g6 12 ♖b5 ♖xh2 13 ♖xd6 ♖xf3+ 14 ♙xf3 exd6 15 ♙f4 h5! 16 ♙xd6+ ♖g8 Black is slightly better in Maciejewski-Sodor, Poland 1976.



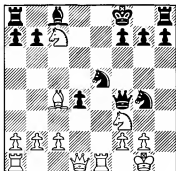
10...hxh2+?

Stronger was 10...Wg6! 11 Qb5 Qxh2 12 Qxd6 Qxf3+ 13 Wxf3 cxd6 14 f4 d7 15 Qxd6+ Qg8 with a similar position to that after 10 Wc2, albeit a tempo down (...h7-h5) for Black.

11 Qxh2 Wxg5 12 Qf3 Wf4

Pálkövi considers 12...Wf4 to be a mistake and that 12...Wc5?! gives Black a clear advantage. I disagree! After 13 Wd2! Qe5? 14 Qxe5 Qxe5 15 Wc2 f6 16 Wh5 g6 17 Wh6+ Qc8 18 Qad1 White has a strong attack, e.g. 18...Qg4 19 Wh4! Qc7 20 Qxe5 fxe5 21 Wxg4 with a clear advantage. 13...Qf5 14 Wf4 Qh6 15 Wxc7 is also good for White, while if 13...f6 14 Qad1 Qf5 15 Wf4! White has a strong initiative (not 15 Qxd4?! Wxd4 16 Wxd4 Qxd4 17 Qxd4 when White has no more than compensation for the material).

13 Qb5 Qce5 14 Qxc7



14...Qxf3+

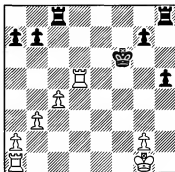
After this White has the advantage, but if 14...Bb8 15 Wxc7! Qxf3+ 16 gxg4 Wh2+ 17 Qf1 Wxc7 18 fxg4 h5 19 Qc5! was dangerous, e.g. 19...Qxg4 (not 19...hxg4? 20 Qxf7! Qxf7 21 Wf4+ Qg8 22 Qc8+ and wins) 20 Qxf7! Qh6 21 Qb3 and White is better, though Black still has fighting chances.

15 Wxf3 Wh2+ 16 Qf1 Qe3+ 17 fxe3 Wxc7 18 Qd5 h5 19 exd4 Qg4 20 Wa3+ Qg8 21 Qg1!

This allows Black counterplay. Simpler was 21 c3 Bd8 22 Qb3 Wh2 23 Qc7 Bf8 24 Qe5 and White is much better.

21...Wd7 22 c4 Qe6 23 Qxe6 Wxd4+ 24 Qe3 Wxe3+ 25 Qxe3 fxe6 26 Qxe6 Qc8 27 b3 Qf7 28 Qe5 Qf6?!

After 28...Qe8 the position is equal. 29 Qd5



29...Qhd8?

Was this a sacrifice to gain counterplay? If so, it was a great illusion. Black should have used the other rook, i.e. 29...Qcd8 30 Qf1+ Qg6 and the position is still about equal. 30 Qxh5 Qd2 31 Qh3 Qe8 32 Qf3+

32 Qf1+ was stronger. It seems likely that both players were very short of time here. Qg6 33 Qg3+ Qh6 34 Qf3 g5 35 Qf6+ Qh5 36 Qf5? Qg8? 1-0

36...Qe2 would have put Black back in the game. Presumably he lost on time while making his move.

Summary

After 4 d4 exd4 5 ♘g5?! is only dangerous for White. Apart from 5 0-0 (which can be found in Chapter 8), the normal way to complicate the position is with 5 e5. Nevertheless, Black should be able to find equality in all lines. Here I have tried to draw your attention to the attractions of 5...♗e4 and 5...♗g4, which both promise good play, but are less well known than 5...d5.

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♙c4 ♗f6 4 d4 exd4 (D) 5 e5

5 ♗g5 – Game 37

5...♗g4

5...♗e4 (D)

6 ♖e2 – Game 38

6 ♙d5 – Game 39

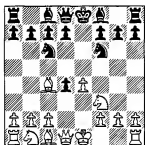
6 ♖e2

6 0-0 – Game 42

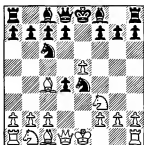
6...♖e7 7 ♙f4 (D)

7...f6 – Game 40

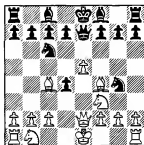
7...d6 – Game 41



4...exd4



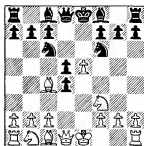
5...♗e4



7 ♙f4

CHAPTER SEVEN

4 d4 exd4 5 e5 d5



1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 d4
exd4 5 e5 d5

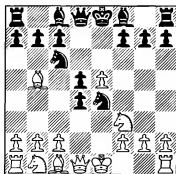
5...d5 is the most natural and also the most popular reply to 5 e5, and then only 6 b5 e4 7 dxd4 makes sense of the position. The game often revolves around a fight for control of e5; Black will try to gain counterplay on the kingside while White starts building his nest there.

6...d7?! is weak: 7 0-0 e7 8 xc6 bxc6 9 dxd4 b8 10 c3 (or 10 f4!?) with good attacking chances) 10...c5 11 db5 c6 12 d6+ exd6 13 exd6 0-0 (if 13...xd6?! 14 e1+ xc6 15 e4 e7 16 g5 with a strong initiative) 14 f4 and White had the advantage in Barczay-Smejkal, Raach 1969.

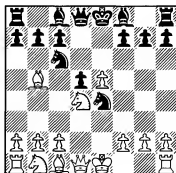
7 dxd4

Game 43
Rogers-Wong Chee Chung
Singapore 1998

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 d4 exd4 4 c4
f6 5 e5 d5 6 b5 e4



There is not really a choice about this.



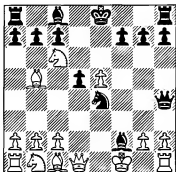
7...xc5!?

An interesting move order. Now 8 e3 e4 9 xc6 bxc6 10 0-0 (see Game 44) reaches the same position as after 7...e4 8 xc6 bxc6 9 0-0 e3 10 e3, but Black has avoided lines with 10 f3 g5. Since Game 44 is perfectly OK for Black, a critical question is whether White can achieve an advantage by other means; in particular 10 d2 (Games

45 & 46) or else by accepting the offered sacrifice on c6 (see below).

8 0-0

8 Qxc6! ? is obviously a critical response, but White comes under a dangerous attack. The position may be defensible but White should have both prior knowledge and iron nerves. After 8... Qxf2+ 9 Qf1 Wh4 we have the following possibilities:

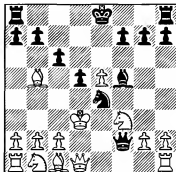


a) 10 Wxd5? Qb6 11 Qd4+ c6 12 g3 Wh3+ 13 Qe1 Wg2 14 Qxc6+ bxc6 15 Wxc6+ Qf8 16 Wf1 Qxd4 17 Wxa8 Qf2+ 18 Qe2 Qxg3+ 19 hxg3 Wxa8 and Black wins.

b) 10 Qc3 Qxc3! (the hardest – and I am a hard man!) 11 bxc3 bxc6 12 Qxc6+ Qf8 13 Wc2 Qc5 (Medvedgy-Mihalincic, Hungary 1993) and the game, though unclear, is a pleasure to play for Black. Also interesting, if slightly risky is 10...0-0! 11 Qxe4 dxe4 12 g3 Qxg3 13 Qe7+ Qh8! (not 13... $\text{Wxe7?!$) 14 hxg3 Wxe5 15 Wh5 Wxh5 16 Wxh5 Qc6 17 Qf4 as the three pawns is not equal to the bishop here) 14 Qxc8 Waxc8 15 Qg5 Wxg5 16 hxg3 Wxe5 17 Wh5 Wxh5 18 Wxh5 f5 and Black is probably OK.

c) 10 Qd4+ c6 11 Qf3 Qg3+ 12 Qxf2 Qe4+ 13 Qc3 Wf2+ 14 Qd3 Qf5 . Theoreticians have treated this position with terrible laziness. They write one after another that Black has a decisive advantage. Is this true? In my opinion, Black has sufficient compensation for the heavy material investments, but nothing more. However, White will have to

walk blindfold through a minefield and disarm twenty bombs on the way. Theoretically it can be done, but in practice you need to have prepared your defence at home beforehand.



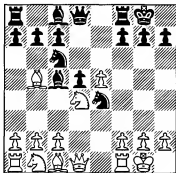
c1) 15 g4 Qg6 (or 15... Qxg4!) 16 Wf1 Wc5 17 Qxc6+ bxc6 18 We1 Qxf3 19 Wxf3 Wc4+ 20 Qc3 Wxc2 and the black attack is strong) 16 Qd4 cxb5 17 Qf5 Qxf5 18 gxf5 Wxf5 19 Wf1 Wxe5 20 We2 0-0 21 c3 b4! and Black has very good compensation for the piece, if nothing more perhaps.

c2) 15 Qd4 Qg6 16 Wf1 Qd2+ (this secures a draw by perpetual; possibly better is 16... Wxg2!) 17 Qe3 cxb5 which looks very dangerous for White, though it is not clear at all) 17 Qc3 We3+ 18 Qd3 Qe4+ 19 Qb3 Qc5+ 20 Qc3 Qa4+ 21 Qb3 Qc5+ with a draw. Note that 21... $\text{Wxd4?!$ lets the king escape by 22 a3! Qc5+ 23 Qa2 Qxd3 24 cxd3 Qxd3 25 Qd2 and White is at least slightly better.

One final intriguing possibility for White is 9 Qe2! ?, which it seems no one has ever tried – probably because allowing 9... Qg4+ looks crazy. But after 10 Qf1 ! Qxd1? 11 Qxd8+ Qxd8 12 Qc3! Qxc3 13 Qg5+ White comes out a piece up, while if 9... $\text{Wh4?!$ (as after 9 Qf1) 10 Wxd5! a6 11 Qd8+ axb5 12 Wxf7+ Qxd8 13 Qd1+ Qd6 14 exd6 Qg4+ 15 Qf1 and White is clearly better. Black should perhaps opt for 9... Qg4+ 10 Qf1 and then 10... Qd7! 11 e6! (forced) 11... Qxe6 12

♠d4 c6 when the weak position of the white king, together with the two central pawns and lead in development guarantees Black long-term counterplay.

8...0-0!



This interesting pawn sacrifice is the point of Black's move order, and guarantees an even game thanks the tempo saved omitting ...♠d7. Instead 8...♠d7 9 ♠xc6 bxc6 would transpose to the 7...♠d7 lines in Game 47.

9 ♠xc6

Black is quite safe after 9 ♠xc6 bxc6 10 ♠xc6 ♠a6! but maybe White is not! For instance, if 11 ♠xa8? ♠xf1 12 ♠xf1 (not 12 ♠e3? ♠xe3 13 fxe3 ♠xg2 and wins) 12...♠h4 and Black is much better. So White must play 11 ♠xd5 ♠xf1 12 ♠xe4 ♠b5! 13 ♠c3 ♠xc6 14 ♠xc6 ♠d4 15 ♠f4 and then 15...♠b8! (a very natural new move from Pálkövi; after 15...♠xc3 16 ♠xc3 White was slightly better in few games) 16 ♠b1 ♠h4 (my addition to Pálkövi's analysis; 16...♠c8 17 ♠xc7 ♠e6 18 ♠d1 ♠fc8 19 ♠d6 ♠xc3 20 bxc3 ♠b2 21 a3 ♠xc2 is equal according to Pálkövi) 17 ♠g3 ♠g5 and White has problems even maintaining equality.

9...bxc6 10 ♠xc6

It seems risky to accept the pawn, but though White has some alternatives here, he has none that maintain equality.

a) 10 f3?! is answered by 10...f6! 11 fxe4 (if 11 exf6?! ♠xf6 12 ♠e3 ♠a6 13 ♠e1 ♠ac8 14 c3 ♠d6 and Black's attack was unstoppable in

Chiburdanidze-Ma.Tseitlin, Moscow 1989) 11...fxe5 12 ♠xf8+ ♠xf8 13 c3! with some chances of saving the position (whereas after 13 ♠e3? exd4 14 ♠xd4 ♠g4 Black just wins).

b) 10 ♠c3?! ♠xc3 11 bxc3 f6 12 ♠f4 fxe5 13 ♠xe5 ♠d7! 14 ♠d2 ♠f7 15 f4 ♠a6 and Black stood better in Novikov-Sulskis, Koszalin 1997.

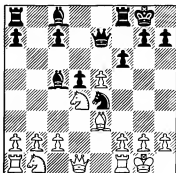
c) 10 ♠e3 ♠e8! 11 ♠d2 (if 11 f3?! ♠d6! or 11 c3 f6! 12 exf6 ♠xf6 and the black attack looks murderous) 11...♠xd2 12 ♠xd2 ♠b6! and Black is already slightly better, e.g. 13 c3 (13 f4 c5 14 ♠b3 d4 15 ♠f2 ♠b7 and White is weak on the light squares) 13...c5 14 ♠b3 c4 15 ♠d4 ♠xe5 and Black was just a pawn up in An.Gonzalez-Rossi, De la Roja Cup 2003.

10...♠d7

After 10...♠h4 11 ♠e3 ♠a6 12 g3! (12 ♠e1? ♠xf2 13 ♠d2 ♠g4 clearly favours Black) 12...♠h3 13 ♠xc5! ♠xf1 14 ♠xf1 ♠xf1+ 15 ♠xf1 ♠xc5 16 ♠c7+ ♠h8 17 ♠xd5 and White has the better ending according to Rogers.

11 ♠d4 ♠e7 12 ♠f4 f6 13 ♠e3!

This surprising retreat is virtually the only move. If 13 e6 (or 13 ♠b3? ♠xf2+! 14 ♠xf2 ♠xf2) 13...♠xe6 14 ♠xc6 ♠xe6 15 ♠xc7 ♠xf2! 16 ♠xf2 ♠xf2+ 17 ♠xf2 ♠ac8 18 ♠a5 ♠f5+ 19 ♠g1 ♠xc2 and Black stands better according to Pálkövi.



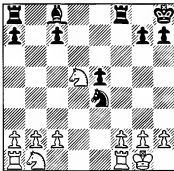
13...fxe5!)

This leads by force to a bad endgame. The alternatives were:

a) 13...♙xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♗xc5 15 ♜d1 ♗xd4 16 ♙xd4 ♙c6 and I do not see any reason why White should be better here.

b) 13...♙b7!? 'with compensation' is recommended in *ECO*. For example: 14 exf6 ♗xf6! (not 14...♗xf6? 15 ♖d2 ♙d6 16 ♖xc4 dxe4 17 ♗g4 when Black must fare without compensation) 15 ♜c1 (15 ♖d2? ♖xf2 16 ♙xf2 ♗xf2 17 ♗xf2 ♙xd4 and Black is much better) 15...♙af8 16 ♖c3 and the game is unclear, but not 16 ♖d2? ♗xf2 17 ♙xf2 ♖xf2 18 ♗xc7 ♖xd1 19 ♗xd1 ♙xe7 and Black has the two bishops and a clear advantage.

14 ♖c6 ♗d6 15 ♙xc5! ♗xc5 16 ♗xd5+ ♗xd5 17 ♖e7+ ♙h8 18 ♖xd5



White has a clear advantage; Black is a pawn down and those which remain are very weak.

18...♙b7!

The best chance.

19 ♖bc3

Not 19 ♖xc7? ♙ac8 20 ♖b5 ♗xc2 and Black is better!

19...c6 20 ♖c7!

A weaker continuation is 20 ♖xe4 cxd5 21 ♖c5 ♙c6 when Black has good drawing chances.

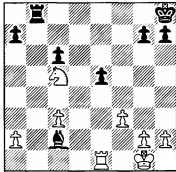
20...♖xc3 21 bxc3 ♙ab8 22 ♖e6 ♙fe8 23 ♖c5

This is the right place for the knight.

23...♙c8 24 ♙ab1 ♙f5 25 f3!

There is no need for White to defend the useless c2-pawn.

25...♙xc2 26 ♗xb8 ♗xb8 27 ♙e1



27...♗b1?

Usually rook and bishop work well together so, without this exchange, Black has real drawing chances. Better was 27...♙g8! (centralising the king) 28 ♗xc5 ♗b2 29 a4 ♙f7 30 ♜c2 ♗b1+ 31 ♖f2 ♙b3 32 ♙g3 ♙d5 and later, after hard work, Black might get a draw. Then again he might not... Life is so brutal. Perhaps Black thought there would be more drawing chances in the minor piece ending, but if so, he was mistaken.

28 ♗xb1 ♙xb1 29 a3 g6?

The last try at saving the game was 29...♙g8 30 ♖d7 e4 31 f4 ♙f7! 32 ♖e5+ ♙e6 33 ♖xc6 ♙d5, but White can still decide the game himself by 34 ♖xa7 (not 34 ♖e5? g5 35 g3 e3! with good counterplay) 34...e3 35 ♙f1 ♙d3+ 36 ♙e1 ♙c4 (if 36...♙e4 37 ♖c6! ♙xf4 38 a4 and White wins) 37 a4 ♙xc3 38 a5 ♙b4 39 ♖c6+ ♙c5 40 ♖d8 ♙c4 41 f5! and White should win after ♖e6.

30 ♙f2 ♙g7 31 ♖d7 e4 32 f4 ♙f7 33 ♖e5+ ♙e6 34 ♖xc6 ♙d5 35 ♖xa7 ♙c4 36 ♙e3

Black has no counterplay now.

36...♙xc3 37 ♖b5+ ♙b3 38 g4 ♙c4 39 ♖c7 h6 40 h4 ♙c2 41 ♖e6 ♙d5 42 ♖f8 g5 43 fxg5 hxg5 44 hxg5 ♙e5 45 ♖g6+

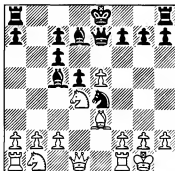
♖d5 46 ♜e7+ ♗e5 47 ♝c6+ ♖d6 48
 ♜d4 ♙d1 49 g6 ♗e7 50 ♜f5+ ♗f8 51
 ♗xe4 ♗g8 52 ♗e5 1-0

Game 44
Wendland-Gröber
 Correspondence 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜f6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♙c4
 ♝c6 5 0-0 ♙c5 6 e5 d5 7 ♙b5 ♜e4 8
 ♜xd4 ♙d7 9 ♙xc6 bxc6 10 ♙e3

After a quite different move order we reach the position which arises after 5 c5 d5 6 ♙b5 ♜e4 7 ♜xd4 ♙c5 8 ♙c3 ♙d7 9 ♙xc6 bxc6 10 0-0.

10...♗e7!



The best solution and one of the points of the 7...♙c5 move order. The idea is simple: to be able to answer 11 ♜f3 with 11...♜d6! as queen pins the white e-pawn against the bishop. Instead if 10...♙b6 11 ♜f3! ♜g5 12 ♗d2 h6 13 ♜b3 a5 14 a4 ♗e7 15 ♜c3 and White had some advantage in Marzoll-Weiger, Germany 1997.

11 ♙e1

After 11 ♜f3 ♜d6! 12 ♙f2 ♜f5 13 c3 0-0 14 ♙e1 ♙b6 15 ♗c2 ♗g5 the position is equal.

11...0-0 12 ♜f3 ♜g5

By defending the bishop White has prevented the knight's retreat to d6. The drawback is that the white rook really belongs on f1 to support the further advance of the f-

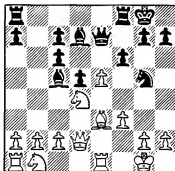
pawn.

13 ♗d2

a) 13 ♜f4! is too optimistic; after 13...♜e6 14 c3 ♙b6 15 ♜f5 (or 15 ♜d2 ♜f6! and Black was slightly better in Boyle-Wicknes, Scotland 1992) 15...♗d8 16 ♗g4 ♜f6! 17 ♜h6+ ♗h8 18 ♜f5 ♜xe5 (also interesting is the tactical 18...♗e7!?) 19 ♙xb6 axb6 20 ♜xe6 ♗xe6 21 ♗xe6 ♙xe6 22 ♜a3 gxf6 and Black is slightly better) 19 ♜xe6 ♗f6 20 ♜f5 ♙xe6 21 ♗xg7+ ♗xg7 22 ♜xg7 ♗xg7 23 ♙xb6 axb6 24 ♙xe5 ♗f6 and Black has the better endgame.

b) 13 ♜d2 ♙b6 14 a4 ♜e6 is slightly better for Black according to Gligoric, but after 15 ♜b3 the position is in my opinion more or less equal.

13...♜f6!



Black is ready to break down the white centre. 13...♜e6!? 14 ♜c3 ♙ab8 15 b3 with an equal game is also OK; if instead 13...♙xd4 14 ♙xd4 ♙f5!? (if 14...♜e6 15 ♙f2 ♜f5 16 c4 White had a slight advantage in Kupreichik-I.Zaitsev, USSR 1969) 15 ♜a3 ♜e6 16 ♙f2 ♙ab8 17 ♙ab1 d4 and the position looks rather unclear.

14 ♜c3

14 ♗h1?! is met by 14...h6! (threatening ...♜xe5) 15 ♙xg5 hxg5 and Black has a nice game while after 14 c3 ♙ac8! it is difficult for White to develop his queenside.

14...♙b6

A prophylactic move; Black places the

bishop on a safe square in advance of any later tactical skirmishes. 14...h6? is now a waste of time after 15 ♖a4! ♙b6 16 ♖xb6 axb6 17 ♙xg5 hxg5 18 e6 and White has a clear advantage, while if 14...fxe5? 15 ♙xg5 ♙xd4+ 16 ♗xd4 ♗xg5 17 ♙xe5 and White stands much better according to Pálkövi.

15 ♖ce2??

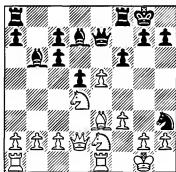
A grave blunder. Any of the following was an improvement:

a) 15 ♙ad1 ♖e6 16 exf6 ♗xf6 17 ♖xc6 ♙xc6 18 ♖a4 ♗g6 with an unclear position in Sokolsky-Shapovalov, corr. 1962/63.

b) 15 ♖a4!? (recommended by Pálkövi) 15...♖e6 16 ♙f2 ♙ae8 17 ♖xb6 axb6 18 ♙g3 f5 and the position is more or less equal.

c) 15 ♙xg5 makes less sense, since after 15...fxg5 16 ♖h1 ♗b4 17 ♖b3 ♙f5 18 ♙ad1 ♙ae8 Black's pieces are more active.

15...♖h3+!!



A surprising check, but this is a desperado position in which, according to Lasker, every piece will try to sell itself as dearly as possible.

16 gxf3

White has no choice.

16...fxe5 17 ♖b3

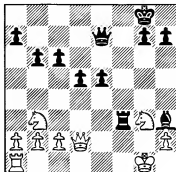
This, too, is the only move.

17...♙xf3

Some sacrifices does not need to be calculated and this is one of these cases. Instead you can think: How many of my pieces are

attacking the enemy king? How many of the enemy's pieces protect the king? Clearly the attacking forces are in the ascendancy.

18 ♙xb6 cxb6 19 ♖g3 ♙af8 20 ♙f1 ♙xh3 21 ♙xf3 ♙xf3

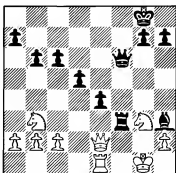


Black has been very successful. The white knight on b3 only exists 'on paper'; it is not taking part in the actual game.

22 ♙e1 ♗f6 23 ♗e2

White might consider selling the rights of this game to Hollywood as a catastrophe film. After 23 ♖c1 e4 24 c3 h5 there is no defence against the move 25...h4 winning the house.

23...e4



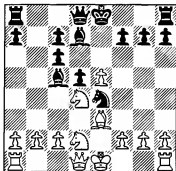
24 ♖d2?

This allows a deadly finish, 24 c3 was the best try, but White will not hold.

24...♗d4+ 25 ♖h1 ♙f2 26 ♗e3 ♗xe3 27 ♙xe3 ♙xd2 0-1

Game 45
Sveshnikov-Zaja
Bled 2001

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♗f6 4 d4
exd4 5 e5 d5 6 ♙b5 ♗e4 7 ♗xd4 ♙c5 8
♙e3 ♗d7 9 ♙xc6 bxc6 10 ♗d2!



At the present moment this seems to be the most dangerous line.

10...♗d2

This theoretical move is not enough for equalising. For other moves see Game 46.

11 ♗xd2 0-0

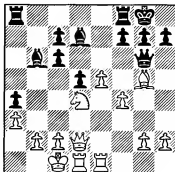
Or 11...♗e7 12 ♗b3 ♙b6 13 ♗c3 0-0 14 0-0 ♗fe8 15 f4 f6 (if 15...♗e6 16 ♗ae1 ♗g6 17 ♗f3 ♙f5 18 ♗g3 ♗h6 19 ♗g5 with a strong attack) 16 ♙c5 fxe5 17 fxe5 ♗g5 18 ♗ae1 and White was slightly better in Karpatchev-Frolov, Tomsk 1988.

12 ♗b3 ♙b6 13 0-0-0?

A brave decision, but not the best. Eventually the white king will be exposed on the open b-file. Instead White should play for a long term advantage with 13 0-0! and be safe and wealthy. After 13...f6 14 exf6 (not 14 f4? fxe5 15 fxe5 ♗g5! and Black takes over the initiative) 14...♗xf6 15 ♗c5 ♙f5 16 c3 ♗ae8 17 ♙d4 ♗g6 18 f3 White is slightly better. Nevertheless, Black can hold the position, as illustrated after 18...♙c8 19 b4 a5 20 ♖h1 ♗e7 21 ♗ae1 ♗fe8 22 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 23 ♗c1 ♗e8 24 ♗xc7 ♗xe7 25 g4 ♗f7 26 ♗g2

♙xc5 27 ♙xc5 h5 28 h3 a4 29 ♗d3 a3 30 ♙d4 hxg4 31 hxg4 ♗e6 32 ♗d1 ♙a6 1/2-1/2 Rybak-Stancl, corr. 2000.

13...♗e7 14 ♗he1 a5 15 a3 a4 16 ♙g5 ♗e6 17 ♗d4 ♗g6 18 f4!?



Very risky, and possibly not very sound.

18...♙a5

If Black gets tempted by material a surprise awaits him: 18...♙g4! 19 h3! (of course White planned to be aggressive; not 19 ♗f3? ♗h5 and Black is just better) 19...♙xd1 20 f5 ♗h5 21 ♗xc6 h6! (necessary, since after 21...♙xc2 22 ♗e7+ ♖h8 23 f6 White's attack is very strong) 22 ♙e7 ♗fe8 23 f6 (not 23 ♗f4? ♗a6! as 24 ♗xd1 then loses to 24...♗e2) 23...♙xc2 24 ♗xc2 ♗h4 25 ♗d1 ♗f4+ 26 ♖b1 ♗e4 27 g4 and this position is difficult to assess. Probably White has enough compensation for the exchange as it is hard to see how the black rooks can get into the game at all.

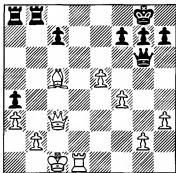
19 c3 c5 20 ♗e2?

A grave error. White cannot afford to be passive with a black offensive coming on the queenside. Better was 20 f5! ♗b6! (20...♙xf5 21 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 22 g4! gives White the initiative; e.g. 22...♗xg4? 23 ♗g1 ♗h5 24 ♙h6 wins, while if 22...♗e6 23 ♗xd5 or 22...♗g6 23 ♙e7 ♗fe8 24 ♗xd5 and White is better) 21 ♗e2 (21 e6? is tactically flawed: 21...cxd4 22 exd7 dxc3 23 bxc3 ♗ab8 and mate is close) 21...♙xf5 22 ♗xd5 ♗ab8 23 ♗d2 and the game is unclear.

20...d4 21 ♖e7

There is no time for 21 h3 ♜fb8 22 g4 ♜c6 23 ♜c2 ♖b5 and the white position cracks.

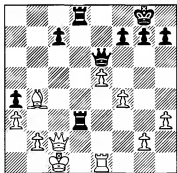
21...♜fb8 22 ♖xc5 dxc3 23 ♖xc3 ♖g4 24 h3 ♖xd1 25 ♖xd1 ♖xc3 26 ♜xc3



Black has a multitude of advantages in this position: White has an exposed king, his bishop has no scope whatsoever, and his pawns are both weak and obstructing his counterplay. Whereas Black has no weaknesses whatsoever, and furthermore is the exchange up. Technically the game is over.

26...♜d8 27 ♖e1 ♜d3 28 ♜c2 ♜ad8 29 ♖b4 ♜e6

29...♜g3? was also strong.



30 ♜xa4?!

Slightly better was 30 ♖b1, though Black wins by 30...♜b3 31 ♜xb3 axb3 32 ♜c1 ♖g3 33 f5 ♖e3! 34 g4 ♖xe5 35 ♜xc7 ♖e3 36 h4

♜e4.

30...♜c4+?

This check loses a tempo for no reason. Instead 30...♜a2! 31 ♖c2 ♜c4+ 32 ♖b1 c5 and wins.

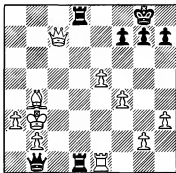
31 ♜c2 ♜a2

Also possible was 31...♜xf4+ 32 ♖b1 ♜f5 33 ♖c1 ♜e6 and Black is much better, but still it can be hard to win a position like this.

32 ♜xc7?

The position is of course very difficult, but this should lose outright. Better was 32 ♜e2 and White can still fight.

32...♜d1+ 33 ♖c2 ♜b1+ 34 ♖b3



34...♜1d3+??

A grave blunder. Black has done really well and now throws it all away. Instead 34...♜d3+ wins quickly, e.g. 35 ♜c3 ♜d5+ 36 ♖c2 ♜xg2+ 37 ♖b3 ♜1d3 or 35 ♖a4 ♜a8+ 36 ♖a5 ♜xc1.

35 ♖c3 ♜xc3+

Black has no choice. If 35...♜xe1 36 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 37 ♖xe1 turns the tables.

36 ♜xc3 ♜b8+ 37 ♖a4 ♜a8+ 38 ♖b5 ♜b8+?!

A quick check in time trouble presumably. Better was 38...♜f5! 39 ♜c1 ♜e6 40 ♜c6 ♜b3+ 41 ♖c5 ♜a5+ 42 ♖d4 ♜a4+ 43 ♖c5 ♜a5+ 44 ♖d4 with perpetual check.

39 ♖a5 ♜a2?

The queen is not really performing any service to the black community from here (after White prevents ...♜d5+). The correct

move was again 39...♖f5! (not 39...♙a8+? 40 ♖b6 ♙b8+ 41 ♖c7 and wins) 40 ♖c6 ♖xf4 and Black has enough counterplay to draw, maybe even some chances for an advantage if White is not careful.

40 ♗d1 h5 41 ♗d6 ♙xb2 42 e6 ♖c2?

A final mistake. Black could still have offered some resistance with 42...♙b8!? 43 e7 ♙a8+ 44 ♖b6 ♖b1+ 45 ♖b4 ♖g1+ 46 ♗d4 ♖h7 though White wins eventually.

43 ♗d8+ ♖h7 44 ♖d3+ g6 45 exf7 1-0

Game 46
Kristensen-Hebden
Kopavogur 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♗c4 ♖f6 5 e5 d5 6 ♗b5 ♖e4 7 ♖xd4 ♗c5 8 ♗e3 ♗d7

There is no sense in exchanging the bishop for only one tempo. After 8...♗xd4?! 9 ♖xd4 (9 ♗xd4 0-0 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♖d2 is also good) 9...0-0 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♖c3 ♖g5 12 ♗xg5 ♖xg5 13 f4 ♖h4+ 14 g3 ♖h5 15 0-0 and White was better in Sveshnikov-Balashov, Elista 1997.

9 ♗xc6 bxc6 10 ♖d2 ♖h4!?

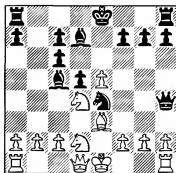
This looks the strongest. Other moves are:

a) 10...♖xd2 was examined in Game 45.

b) 10...♖g5 11 c3! (weak is 11 ♖xc6? ♗xc6 12 ♗xc5 d4! with a very strong initiative for the pawn) 11...♗b6 12 f4 ♖e6 13 0-0 g6 14 ♖h1 0-0 15 ♖e1 (threatening 16 f5) 15...♖g7 16 b4 and White was better in Tzermianos-Pavlovic, Agios 1995.

c) 10...♖e7?! is strongly met by 11 ♖xe4 dxe4 12 e6! fxe6 (not 12...♗xc6? 13 ♖xe6 ♗xe3 14 ♖xg7+ ♖f8 15 ♖f5 ♖b4+ 16 c3 and wins) 13 ♖xc6! (better than 13 ♖h5+ g6 14 ♖e5 0-0-0?! when White is better but the position is very messy) 13...♗b4+ 14 ♖xb4 ♖xb4+ 15 ♗d2 ♖xd2+ (15...♖xb2?! 16 0-0 gives White a terrible attack; it is hard to say that he has compensation for the pawn here – the pawn does not matter), 16 ♖xd2 with a good endgame for White. In these days when

the chess games are played with faster and faster time controls, it becomes increasingly difficult to defend positions like this.



11 ♖xe4

White has two serious alternatives:

a) 11 0-0 ♗b6 12 c3 0-0 13 f3 ♖xd2 14 ♖xd2 c5 15 ♖e2 and the position is more or less equal.

b) 11 ♖f3 and then:

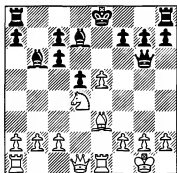
b1) 11...♖e7 12 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 13 0-0 ♙b8! (White has problems with defending the pawn on b2 without putting his pieces in an unnatural position) 14 ♖b3 ♖e6 15 ♖d3 0-0 and despite appearances to the contrary Black's position is good; for example, if 16 c4?! ♖f4! and Black takes over the initiative.

b2) 11...♗xc3?! is exciting. Objectively Black does not have enough compensation for the queen but it is an interesting bluff and calculation includes severe psychological shock. Realising the material superiority is not at all easy, and in the game several inaccurate white moves will give Black the initiative. It is possible that this sacrifice also benefits from the human tendency towards giving gifts: Black gives a queen, what will White give? Kotronias-Barbero, Budapest 1988, continued 12 ♖xh4 ♗xd2+ 13 ♖f1 ♗a5 14 ♖e2? (even in a dream two bishops are not a match for the queen in this position, so White is returning the generosity – after this move Black wins the exchange and the position becomes more unclear; instead

14 Qf3 was correct and I cannot see how Black can develop an initiative after this simple move, e.g. 14... Qb6 15 Qd4 and White is close to winning) 14...g5 15 Qf3 Qb6 16 c3 Qxf2 17 Qd4 Qxh1 18 Qg1 0-0-0 19 b4 Qde8 20 Qxh1 and White was better after all.
11... Qxe4 12 0-0 Qb6

A strong prophylactic move; Black moves his bishop out of danger and the way of his c-pawn. After 12...0-0? 13 Qe1 Qg6 14 Qc6 Qxc6 15 Qxc5 White has a big advantage and his bishop is much more active.

13 Qe1 Qg6



14 a4

14 Qb3 0-0 15 Qc5 Qfe8 16 Qc3 a5 17 a4 Qf5 is unclear. Instead 16 a4! is interesting from a practical point of view. White prepares two pawn sacrifices, in exchange for which he seize the initiative and condemn the opponent to a passive defence: 16... Qf5 (16...a5! keeps the tension) 17 Qc1 Qab8 18 Qc3 Qxc5 (a brave decision, but Black has already decided to do this with 17... Qab8). 19 Qxc5 Qxb2 20 Qd4 Qxc2 21 Qxc2 Qxc2 22 h3 and White had a strong initiative in Doghri-Matsuo, Yerevan 1996. Aaron Nimzowitsch (second only to Wilhelm Steinitz in the history of chess theoreticians) would be proud seeing this position. His thoughts about the effectiveness of the blockade in chess is still very much relevant!

14...a5 15 Qa3 ?

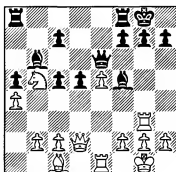
Usually moves like these are good, but not

here. The problem is in transferring the rook to the kingside as White's minor pieces are in the way. Better is 15 Qb3 and position is unclear.

15...0-0 16 Qc1 !

Consistent, since without this the rook faces unemployment. But the bishop is needed to fight for the c5-square. One of the hardest things in chess, and in life, is to admit one's own stupidity and correct one's mistakes. Here it would have been better to forget about the rook manoeuvre and play 16 Qb3 !, and after 16... Qf5 17 Qxb6 cxb6 (not 17... Qxc2 ? 18 Qd2 cxb6 19 Qd4 Qe4 20 Qg3 and Black has problems) 18 Qd4 the position is roughly equal.

16... Qg4 17 Qd2 c5 18 Qb5 Qe6 19 Qg3 Qf5



20 h4?

Steinitz turned in his grave when White played this! The right to attack comes with having the better position, and here Black is better! The pawn on h4 is just another weakness and does little good for White. Better was 20 b3 when White is worse but far from lost.

20... Qh8

A useful move. Black does not want to risk being at the wrong end of the stick on the g-file.

21 Qd1 !

Making way for the bishop, but it is the wrong diagonal. 21 b3 and Qb2 was better.

21...♖ae8 22 ♖f4

Even now 22 b3 looks better.

22...h6 23 c3 ♖h7 24 ♖d2 ♖e7 25 ♖c1 f6!

It is time to open the position.

26 c4 d4 27 exf6 ♖xf6 28 ♖b3 ♖g4 29 ♖g3 ♖e2 30 ♖d1 ♖fe6 31 ♖f3

Or 31 ♖xc7 ♖c2 and wins.

31...♖c2! 0-1

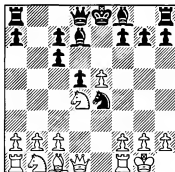
Game 47
Sveshnikov-Zaitsev
Podolsk 1992

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 d4 exd4 5 e5 d5 6 ♖b5 ♖e4 7 ♖xd4 ♖d7

This move is slightly passive and reduces Black's possibilities. Since it is quite possible to play the active 7...♖c5 (as we have seen Games 43-46), Black should probably do so.

8 ♖xc6

The only serious move. After 8 ♖xc6? bxc6 9 ♖d3 ♖c5! Black has the advantage as 10 ♖xe4 is answered by 10...♖h4! and Black obtains the bishop pair.

8...bxc6 9 0-0**9...♖h4!?**

The only independent move to justify playing 7...♖d7. Other moves are:

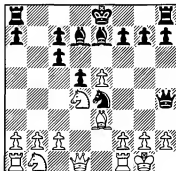
a) 9...♖c5 10 ♖c3 transposes to Game 44, but White can also play 10 f3 ♖g5 11 f4 ♖e4 12 ♖c3 ♖b6 13 ♖d2 ♖xd2 14 ♖xd2 c5 (otherwise White takes control of c5 by ♖b3

and ♖c3) 15 ♖f3 (or 15 ♖e2 d4 16 ♖f2 0-0 17 c4 – Sveshnikov) 15...d4 16 ♖f2 ♖c6 17 ♖h4 ♖d7 with an unclear position.

b) 9...♖e7? is even more passive. After 10 f3 ♖g5 11 f4 ♖e4 12 f5 c5 13 ♖e2 ♖b5 14 ♖a3 ♖c6 15 e4 d4 16 ♖f4 ♖g5 17 ♖d3 ♖b8 18 ♖c2 h6 19 ♖f4 ♖b6 20 ♖ae1 ♖a8 21 ♖g4 White had a clear advantage in Sveshnikov-Fercec, Nova Gorica 1996.

c) 9...g6 is risky. After 10 f3 ♖c5 11 f4 ♖e6? (provocative; but if 11...♖g7 12 b4! and White has a stable advantage) 12 f5! ♖xd4 13 ♖xd4 ♖xf5 14 e6 f6 15 ♖c3 White had fine compensation in Shipov-Solntsev, Moscow 1964.

d) 9...c5? 10 ♖b3 c6 (or 10...♖c6? 11 f3 ♖g5 12 ♖a5 and White is better) 11 c4 d4 (or 11...dxc4 12 ♖3d2) 12 f4 and White has a clear advantage.

10 ♖e3 ♖e7**11 ♖d2?!**

More accurate is 11 ♖b3! 0-0 12 ♖1d2 and White is slightly better – Pálkövi.

11...♖xd2 12 ♖xd2 c5 13 ♖f3 ♖e4 14 ♖fe1

In a position like this it is always good to try to find some possibility for forcing the opponent's king to stay in the centre. Here, however, it does not work. 14 ♖g5? ♖xg5 15 ♖xg5 ♖d4! and Black has a fine position, with potential for an advantage.

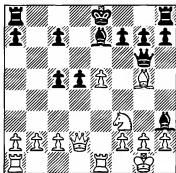
14...♖h3!

It is always useful to make a mess of the

enemy camp.

15 ♔f4 ♖g6 **16** ♔g5?

A mistake which passes by unpunished. Necessary was 16 ♔g3 ♔c6 17 ♔h4 ♔xh4 18 ♔xh4 ♖h5 19 ♔f3 0-0 where the position is about equal.



16...0-0-0?

Stronger was 16...h6! 17 gxh3 (forced; 17 ♖xd5? ♔d8 18 ♖b3 ♔e6 and Black wins) 17...♔xg5 18 ♖d3 (very risky would be 18 ♖xd5!? ♔d2+ 19 ♔h1 ♔d8 20 ♖xc5 ♔xe1 21 ♖xe1 ♖b6 22 ♖a3 with the idea of 22...♖xf2 23 c6 with play, as Black replies 22...♔d7! whereafter he is better) 18...♖xd3 19 cxd3 ♖b8 and Black is slightly better.

17 gxh3 h6 18 ♖a5!

This is the point! After having castled queenside Black has problems with his king.

18...♔xg5 19 ♔xg5 hxg5 20 ♖xa7 ♖c6 21 ♔e3 ♔h4 22 ♔a3 ♔b4 23 ♔a6 ♔b6 24 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 25 ♖a8+

The transition to the endgame is a very important moment. After 25 ♖xb6? cxb6 Black has a much better rook ending, despite the pawn deficit, because of the white pawn weaknesses.

25...♖b8 26 ♖a3 ♖b4

26...♖b6? 27 ♔d1 d4 (27...♖b8?? 28 ♔d3 c4 29 ♖e7 c6 30 ♔a3 and White wins) 28 ♖a8+ ♖b8 29 ♖xb8+ ♔xb8 30 b3 and White has winning chances.

27 ♖xb4 cxb4

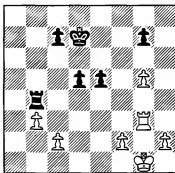
Now the position is different. White can activate his rook immediately.

28 a3 bxa3

Or 28...♔e8 29 axb4 ♔xc5 30 ♔f1 ♔d7 and the position is more or less equal.

29 ♔xa3 ♔d7 30 ♔g3 f6 31 h4 fxe5 32 hxg5 ♔b8 33 b3 ♔b4!

It is important to prevent White from creating a passed pawn with h4.



34 h3

Look at this. Two strong grandmaster have a drawn position and they continue to fight! Why? Because they know that mistakes are human.

34...♔e6 35 ♔c3 ♔d6 36 ♔f3 ♔e6 37 ♔g2 c5 38 g6 c4 39 ♔f7 cxb3 40 cxb3 ♔xb3 41 h4

41 ♔xg7 ♔b8' 42 h4 ♔f6 43 ♔d7 ♔xg6 and the draw is near.

41...♔b8 42 ♔f3 ♔h8 43 ♔g4 d4 44 ♔xg7 ♔f6 45 ♔a7 ♔xg6 46 h5+ ♔h6 47 ♔a6+ ♔h7 48 ♔a7+ ½-½

Summary

4 d4 e5 5 c5 d5 is a good but perhaps too well-travelled road. After 6 ♖b5 ♗c4 7 ♗xd4 ♘c5 accepting the sacrifice on c6 – either immediately or following 8 0-0 0-0 – seems to give Black sufficient counterplay. The only way for White to fight for an advantage is in the line 8 ♘c3 ♘d7 9 ♘c6 bxc6 10 ♗d2!, when Black should be very careful. Now 10...♗h4!? is the best chance for equality, as 10...♗xd2 11 ♗xd2 allows White a small edge.

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 ♘c4 ♗f6 4 d4 exd4 5 e5 d5 6 ♖b5 ♗e4 7 ♗xd4 ♘c5 (D)

7...♘d7 8 ♘xc6 bxc6 9 0-0 (D) ♗h4 – Game 47

8 ♘e3

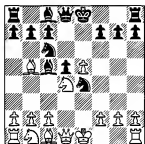
8 0-0 – Game 43

8...♘d7 9 ♘xc6 bxc6 10 ♗d2 (D)

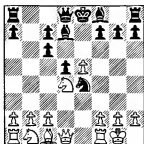
10...♗e7 – Game 44

10...♗xd2 – Game 45

10...♗h4 – Game 46



7...♘c5



9 0-0



10 ♗d2

CHAPTER EIGHT

4 d4 exd4 5 0-0

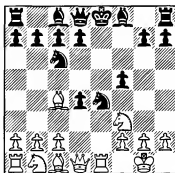


1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♙f6 4 d4
exd4 5 0-0

If you are a grandmaster 5 0-0 is close to being a small mistake! Why? Well, after castling White has no real chances of fighting for an advantage. In fact, there is a real chance White will emerge with a slightly worse position. The game takes on a very forcing nature and Black stands well here. The safest and most popular response is 5...♗xc4! which is the subject of Games 48-54. Grandmasters favour this move enormously (75% of Grandmasters, who expressed a preference, said ...).

The alternative, 5...♗c5 (Games 55-57) is known as the Max Lange Attack. It was very popular about 100-150 years ago. However, after it became well known that 5...♗xc4 gives Black an equal game, the Max Lange Attack was seen seldomly in tournament play. This is a shame as Black has some nice ideas in this line.

in the rest of the chapter.



7 ♗d5!

Also good is 7 ♗xd4 d5 (not 7...♗c5? 8 ♗xc4! fx4 9 ♗h5+ and wins) 8 ♗b5 and if 8...♗d6 (hoping for 9 ♖3 ♗h4 or 9 ♗xc6 ♗xh2+ 10 ♗f1 ♗h4 with counterplay, or if 9 h3 0-0! 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♗xc6 ♗h2+ 12 ♗xh2 ♗d6+) 9 g3! prevents all threats and White wins material.

7...♗b4

7...♗c7 is met with 8 ♗xd4 ♗xd5 9 ♗xd5 ♗e7 10 ♗g5! (a very energetic move; not 10 ♗xf5? d5 and Black is OK) 10...♗xg5 11 ♗xc4! ♗e7 (if 11...fxe4 12 ♗xg5 wins) 12 ♗e1 c6 13 ♗xf5 d5 14 ♗f3 and White has a clear advantage as the black king is too exposed. Wolfe-Lheureux, email 2001, contin-

Game 48
Ellner-Andruss
Correspondence 1977

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♙f6 4 d4
exd4 5 0-0 ♗xc4 6 ♗e1 f5?

The only move is 6...d5 which is examined

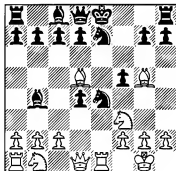
ued 14...♖d6 15 ♘g5 ♘e6 16 ♘xc7 ♖xc7 17 ♘d2 0-0-0? (but 17...♙f8! 18 ♖h5+ g6 19 ♖e5 is also good for White, e.g. 19...♙f6 20 ♘b3 0-0-0 21 ♘c5 b6 22 ♘xc6 ♙e8 23 ♖c7+! ♖xc7 24 ♘xc7 ♙xe1+ 25 ♙xe1 ♘xc7 26 ♙c7+ ♘d6 27 ♙xh7 ♙e6 28 ♘f1 and White has serious winning chances) 18 ♖e3 ♙he8 19 ♖xa7 ♖f6 20 ♘b3 ♘d7 21 c4 dxc4 22 ♘c5 ♖xb2 23 ♙eb1 1-0.

8 ♘g5!

A powerful move that gives Black a lot of problems.

8...♗e7?

After this the game is lost. 8...♘e1! is the best chance, but Black is still in trouble after 9 ♘xd8 ♘xf2+ 10 ♘f1 ♘xd8 11 ♘xe4 (simplest; instead 11 ♘bd2 ♘f6 12 ♘xc6 ♘g4! is not completely clear) 11...fxe4 12 ♘xf2 exf3 13 ♖xf3 d6 14 ♖f7 ♙e8 15 ♖xg7 ♘d7 16 ♖xh7 and White should win.



9 ♙xe4!

This sacrifice ensures that the few white pieces already developed get free play against the black king.

9...fxe4 10 ♗e5 ♘f8

R.Adams-Roe, email 1999, finished differently: 10...♙f8 11 ♖h5+ g6 12 ♖xh7 ♘xd5 13 ♖xg6+ ♙f7 14 ♖xf7 mate.

11 ♘xe4

And, unsurprisingly, there is no defence against ♖f3+.

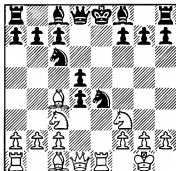
11...d6 12 ♖f3+ ♘f5 13 ♘xf5 ♘xf5 14 ♖xf5+ 1-0

Game 49 Struik-Mikhailchishin Zwolle 2003

1 e4 e5 2 ♘c4 ♘f6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 0-0 ♘xe4! 6 ♙e1 d5 7 ♘xd5

This is the only serious move. 7 ♘xd4? is bad for many reasons, one of them being 7...♘xd4 (another is 7...♘e7! 8 ♘b5 ♘d7 9 ♘xc6 bxc6 10 f3 ♘d6 11 ♘g5 f6 and White does not have compensation for the pawn) 8 ♖xd4 ♘c6 9 ♘xd5 ♖xd5 10 ♖xe4 ♖xe4 11 ♙xe4 0-0-0 and Black clearly is better.

7 ♘c3?! is seen occasionally, and is 'better than its reputation' according to the great Russian theoretician Yakov Estrin. In my opinion the bad reputation is justified, as after this move White can no longer keep equality, but has to fight to stay alive:



a) 7...dxc4 8 ♙xe4+ ♘e7 9 ♘xd4 f5 and then:

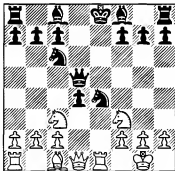
a1) 10 ♘h6? (though not very important, the following line is nice) 11...fxe4 11 ♘xg7 ♙f8! (in ECO they only give 11...♘f7 when the position is unclear) 12 ♖h5+ ♙f7 13 ♙d1 (if 13 ♘xc6 bxc6 14 ♙d1 ♘d7 15 ♖xh7 ♘f8 16 ♖xe4+ ♖c7 and at the end of the day, a rook is a rook; White should lose) 13...♘d7 14 ♘xc6 bxc6 15 ♘xe4 ♙b8 16 ♖xh7 ♘f8 17 ♖g6 ♘xg7 18 ♘g5 ♖c7 19 ♘xf7 ♘f8 20 ♘g5 ♙b5 and Black wins.

a2) 10 ♙f4! 0-0 (also possible is 10...♘g5

11 ♖c2+ ♖c7 12 ♖xe7+ ♗xc7 13 ♗db5 ♗xf4 14 ♗xf4 ♜f7 15 ♗xc7 ♜b8 16 ♗7b5 ♜a8 17 ♗c7 with a draw by repetition) 11 ♗xc6 ♖xd1+ 12 ♗xd1 bxc6 13 ♜xc4 c5 where both players have their chances, even though Black might have an easier game, practically speaking.

b) 7...dxc3! 8 ♗xd5 ♗c6 (if 8...f5?! 9 ♗g5! with a strong attack according to Tartakower) 9 ♗xc4 ♖xd1 10 ♜xd1 cxb2 11 ♗xb2 f6 and Black is slightly better. White's lead in development is only temporary (Black will complete the mobilisation of his forces in two moves), and while White can regain the pawn, structurally he has some problems; e.g. 12 ♗d4 (if 12 ♗e1 ♜f7 13 ♗c3 ♗c5 14 ♜ab1 ♗b6 15 a4 a5 with a clear advantage to Black) 12...♗xd4 13 ♗xd4 0-0-0 (not 13...c6?! 14 ♗ab1 and White has the initiative) 14 ♗xa7 ♗d6 and Black is to be preferred.

7...♖xd5 8 ♗c3



8...♖h5!

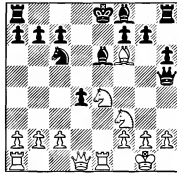
This is a generally underestimated move. The queen looks very natural on the kingside in this position. The reason for this move's lack of support is that 8...♖a5 (Games 51-54) equalises easily and holds no traps or tactical pitfalls and potholes.

9 ♗xe4 ♗e6 10 ♗g5

If 10 ♗eg5 0-0-0 11 ♗xc6 fxe6 12 ♜xc6 ♗d6 13 ♗d2 ♜he8 and Black is clearly better; ...g5-g4 is a terrible threat.

10...♗d6

The main alternative, 10...♗b4, is considered in Game 50. Also seen is 10...h6 11 ♗f6 and then:

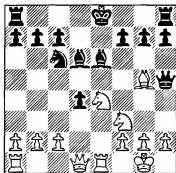


a) 11...♖d5? 12 c3 d3 13 ♗d4 ♗xd4 14 cxd4 and Black is under terrible pressure. After moves like 14...♖b5 15 ♗c3 ♖c4 16 d5 gxf6 17 dxe6 fxe6 18 ♖h5+ ♜d8 19 ♖f7 White has a winning attack.

b) 11...♖a5?! 12 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 (if 12...gxf6 13 ♗xf6+ ♜e7 14 b4! ♗xb4 15 ♗xc6 and White wins; one line is 15...♗xf6 16 ♖d4+ ♜g6 17 ♖xh8 fxe6 18 ♖g8+ ♗g7 19 ♜xc6+ ♜f5 20 ♖f7+ ♜g5 21 ♖g6+ ♜h4 22 ♜c4 mate) 13 ♖xd4 c5! (the only move; again if 13...gxf6 14 ♗xf6+ ♜e7 15 ♗d5+ and White wins) 14 ♖c3 ♖xc3 15 ♗xc3 and White is somewhat better as Black cannot easily develop his kingside.

c) 11...♖g6! (the only move) 12 ♗h4 ♖h7 13 ♖h5 (after 13 f4 ♗e7 14 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 15 ♖xd4 0-0 Black does not appear to be any worse) 13...♗b4 (or 13...♗d7?! 14 ♜ad1 ♗e8 15 ♗xd4 ♜c8 16 ♖b5 a6 17 ♖a4 ♗e7 18 ♗f3 with an unclear position in Helvenstein-Ye Rongguang, Netherlands 1996; the black queen is oddly placed on h7, but it will soon return to the centre, and White has no obvious ways to attack the black king immediately) 14 c3 dxc3 15 bxc3 ♗a3 16 ♗f5 ♖xf5! 17 ♗d6+ ♗xd6 18 ♖xf5 gxf6 19 ♖xf6 ♖h7 20 ♜ad1 ♜d8 with a very unclear situation. Usually three minor pieces should favour

Black, but here his co-ordination is not too good. Maybe White should just play 21 ♖f5 ♜g7 22 ♖f6 ♜g8 23 ♜xe6+ fxe6 24 ♖xc6+ ♚e7 25 ♖xh6 when he has all the passed pawns to work with.



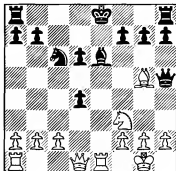
11 ♖xd6+

11 ♖f6? is answered by the strong 11...♗xh2!. It is interesting that this move was introduced as a novelty in *Chess Informant* #68 (from 1997). In the real world this move has been well known since the beginning of the 90's! Van Wely-Van de Oudeweetering, Rotterdam 1990, continued 12 ♖xh2 (not 12 ♖f1? ♗c4+ and it is all over) 12...♗xd1 13 ♜axd1 gxh6 14 ♖xf6+ ♖f8 15 ♖f3 ♜d8 16 a3 h5 17 ♜d2 ♜h6 and Black was simply a pawn up.

White can also try 11 e4! 0-0 (the most natural response) 12 c5 ♗e5 13 ♖xe5 ♗xd1 14 ♜axd1 ♖xe5 15 ♜xd4 f6 16 ♗f4 ♗xa2 17 ♚c3 ♗f7 and the position was roughly equal in Sveshnikov-Bezgodov, St. Petersburg 1994. 11...♗b4 is probably more or less even too. But not 11...dxc3? 12 ♖xd6+ cxd6 13 ♗xd6 and White has a decisive attack. To prevent 14 ♜ad1 (and 15 ♗d7+) Black has to try 13...c2 (if 13...cxb2 14 ♜ab1! and the threat is simply ♜xb2 and ♜xb7, which Black can do nothing about; e.g. 14...h6 15 ♜xb2 hxg5 16 ♜xb7 ♜c8 and then 17 ♜xe6+ fxe6 18 ♗d7+ leads to mate) 14 ♜c6+ fxc6 15 ♜e1! and Black has no defence; if 15...c1 ♗ 16 ♜xc1 ♖f7 17 ♗d7+ ♖g8 18 ♖xb7 and

White wins.

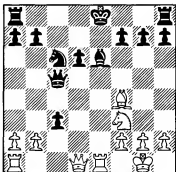
11...cxd6



12 ♗f4 ♖c5!

ECO gives only 12...♗d5 13 c3 ♜c8 (or 13...♖d7 14 ♖a4 b5 15 ♗a6 ♜hb8 16 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 17 cxd4 g5 18 ♗d2 h5 with unclear play in Wirschell-Hector, Berlin 1993) 14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 16 cxd4 ♖d7 with equality. The text is better since the black queen now will not be hanging after ...d4xc3.

13 c3 dxc3



14 ♜c1?

This is a grave error. White hopes that the pin will allow him to get some initiative, but in reality he only loses the b2-pawn – as well as the initiative. The correct move was 14 ♗xd6 ♖a5 15 ♖c2! (White needs to play energetically; if 15 bxc3 0-0-0 Black is at least slightly better, as White has big problems

with the bishop on d6; e.g. 16 c4 ♖xc4 17 ♖c1 ♜d5! 18 ♗e5 ♜xd6 19 ♗xc4 ♜xd1 20 ♜exd1 ♜xd1+ 21 ♜xd1 ♜d8 and Black wins! 15...0-0-0 16 ♗e5 ♗xe5 17 ♜xe5 ♗d5 18 ♜ae1 ♗b8 19 bxc3 and the position is unclear. Black has good long term prospects, but White has some initiative which may be sufficient to grant him even chances.

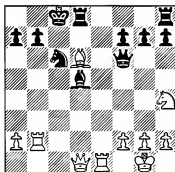
14...♜f5! 15 ♗xd6?

This allows Black to create a nasty pin. Instead, after 15 ♗g3 cxb2 16 ♖b1 0-0 17 ♜xb2 ♜fe8 18 ♜xb7 ♗d5 Black has an extra pawn, but White has some fighting chances.

15...cxb2 16 ♜c2 0-0-0 17 ♜xb2 ♗d5! 18 ♗h4?

Preferable was 18 ♗g3 ♗xf3 19 ♜xf3 ♜xf3 20 gxf3. Of course this is lost, particularly against such a strong player as Mikhailchishin, but White is still alive for the time being.

18...♜f6!



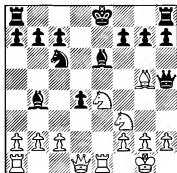
Now White has no way to avoid losing material – a truly spectacular position where most of the white pieces are hanging loosely around the board.

19 ♜xd5 ♜xb2 20 ♗f5 ♜he8 21 ♜d1 ♜e6 22 ♜c5 ♜e5 0-1

Game 50
Hoogervorst-Simmelink
Correspondence 1988

1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♗c4

♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 ♜e1 d5 7 ♗xd5 ♜xd5 8 ♗c3 ♜h5 9 ♗xe4 ♗e6 10 ♗g5 ♗b4!?



Black wants to see blood!

11 c3

This is too ambitious. Calm play is to be preferred here; i.e. 11 ♗xd4 ♜xd1 12 ♜exd1 ♗xd4 13 ♜xd4 ♗c7 and then:

a) 14 ♜e1 ♜d8 15 ♜d8+ (if 15 ♜a4 a6 16 ♗xe7 ♗xc7 17 ♗c5 ♜d2! and Black has sufficient counterplay) 15...♗xd8 16 ♜d1+ ♗e8 17 ♜c3 f5 18 ♗c5 ♗xc5 19 ♗xc5 with equality – or if you are Anatoly Karpov, with a slightly better position for White.

b) 14 ♗xe7 ♗xc7 15 ♗c5 ♜ad8 16 ♗xe6 fxe6 was Van der Tuuk-Piket, Netherlands 1993; the position is equal, but not a draw – as Piket proved by winning this game.

11...dxc3 12 bxc3 ♗a5 13 h4

White has also tried 13 ♜c1 0-0 14 ♗g3 ♜g6 15 ♗h4 ♜d3 16 ♗e4 ♗h8 17 ♜f4 and White's compensation is only of a practical nature; objectively the position is good for Black. For example, 17...♗xc3! 18 ♜ad1 ♜c4 19 ♗xc3 ♜xc3 20 ♜xc7 ♜ab8 (stronger than 20...♜ae8 as in Kamsky-Kupreichik, Palma de Mallorca 1989, and although he was still better for a long time Black eventually managed to lose this game) 21 ♜c3 ♜c2 22 ♜de1 ♜xa2 23 ♜g3 ♜d5 24 ♜d3 ♜c4 and after overcoming some technical problems Black should win.

13...♜g4 14 ♜b1

White does not have an easy life here:

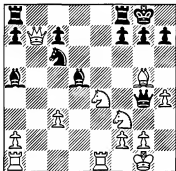
a) 14 ♖g3 ♗b6 15 ♞b1 h6! (suggested by Pálkövi) 16 ♗e4 ♜xg3 17 ♞xb6 ♗d6 18 ♞d4 axb6 19 ♞xd6 cxd6 20 ♗e3 0-0 Black is much better.

b) 14 ♗a4 0-0 15 ♖h2 ♗f5 16 ♞ab1 ♗b6 17 ♞b5 ♗g6 18 h5 ♗xh5 19 ♗e7 ♗xb5!? (or 19... ♗h6 20 ♗xf8 ♞xf8 and Black is better – Pálkövi) 20 ♗xb5 ♖xe7 21 ♖g5 ♞ad8 22 ♗e2 ♞d6 and Black is much better. After a probable exchange on e6 Black gets more than his share of the action on the f-file.

14...0-0!

Some poor souls have tried 14... ♗b6?? and after 15 ♖h2! Black loses at least a piece; e.g. 15... ♗f5 16 ♖d6+! cxd6 17 ♗xf5.

15 ♗xb7 ♗d5



Material equilibrium has been restored, but white pieces are not ready for an even fight.

16 ♖h2 ♗f5 17 g4 ♗d7 18 ♞ad1 ♞ab8 19 ♗a6 f6

Also interesting is 19... f5? 20 ♖c5 ♗f7 21 ♗d3 ♗e4! (the point) 22 ♖xe4 fxe4 23 ♗c2 h6 24 ♗e3 ♗c4 and Black stands better, since the white king's position is very fragile.

20 ♗e3 f5 21 ♞e2!

The only move. If 21 ♖c5 ♗f7 22 ♗d3 ♗xa2 23 ♖d7 ♞bd8 24 ♖g5 ♗b3 25 ♗xd8 (if 25 ♞d2 ♗c4! wins) 25... ♞xd8 26 ♞d2 ♗e6 27 ♞xe6 ♗xe6 and Black is much better.

21...fxe4 22 c4

If 22 ♞cd2 ♗e6 23 ♞xd5 ♗b6 24 ♗c2 ♖e5! 25 ♗xb6 ♞xb6 26 ♞d8 ♖f3+ 27 ♖h1

♖xh4 and Black is much better.

22... ♗b6

22... ♞f6 23 ♞xd5 ♞b1+ 24 ♖g2 ♞d6 looked interesting; the main idea is 25 ♞xa5 ♖d4 26 ♗xa7 ♖xc2 but then 27 ♗a8+ ♗d8 28 ♗xe4 gives White an excellent game!

23 ♞xd5 ♗e6 24 ♗a3 ♖e7

Not 24... ♖e5 25 ♞xe5 ♗xe5 26 c5 and White is back in the game.

25 ♞dd2 ♖g6?!

25...c5! seems much stronger, blocking White's only possible counterplay.

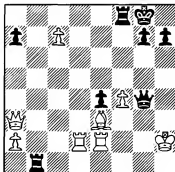
26 c5 ♖xh4 27 cxb6 ♖f3+ 28 ♖g2 ♖xh2

Better looks 28... ♗e5 29 ♖f1 ♖xd2 30 ♞xd2 axb6 31 ♖g3 ♞bd8 32 ♗b3+ ♖h8 33 ♗b4 ♗e6 34 ♗xe4 ♗xe4+ 35 ♖xe4 ♞xd2 36 ♗xd2 ♞a8 and Black has more chances in this endgame.

29 bxc7?

After 29 ♖xh2 ♗xg4 30 ♗e7 White is so active that Black has nothing better than 30... ♗h5+ 31 ♖g2 ♗f3+ 32 ♖g1 ♗g4+ 33 ♖f1 ♗h3+ with a draw.

29... ♗xg4+ 30 ♖xh2 ♞b1 31 f4



31... ♞b5?

In this fantastically complicated position Black makes a mistake. Instead, if 31...g5 32 ♗xf8+! (not 32 c8 ♗? ♞xc8 33 fxg5 ♞f8 and there is no hiding for the white king) 32... ♖xf8 33 fxg5 ♞f1 34 ♞f2+ ♞xf2+ 35 ♞xf2+ ♖e7 36 ♞c2 and Black must take the draw by 36... ♗h4+ 37 ♖g2 ♗g4+ 38 ♖h2

with a draw.

The best option is 31...exf3! 32 ♖d4 ♖h5+ 33 ♖g3 ♖c5+ 34 ♜f4 ♜g1+ 35 ♖h2 (not 35 ♖f2? ♜g2+ 36 ♖f1 fxc2+ 37 ♖xg2 e1N+ 38 ♖g3 ♖g5+ 39 ♖f2 ♜xf4+ 40 ♖xf4 ♜xf4+ 41 ♖xe1 ♖xc7 and wins) 35...♜xf4 36 c8♖+ ♜f8+ 37 ♖xg1 ♜xc8 38 ♖b3+ ♖h8 39 ♖b2 h6 and with the white king so exposed, Black can fight for a win at no risk.

32 ♖c5?

Here White misses the chance to make a fantastic draw: 32 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 33 f5!! blocking the black queen's defence of c8 (since if 33...♖xf5?? 34 ♜f2 wins), so Black must again take the perpetual check by 33...♖h4+ 34 ♖g2 ♖g4+ etc.

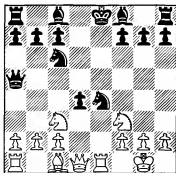
32...♜xf4+ 33 ♖g3 ♖xg3+ 34 ♖xg3 ♖xc5

Black is simply two pawns up – and in a correspondence game this is equivalent to being a queen up in a normal game.

35 ♖d7 ♜c3+ 36 ♖h4 e3 37 ♖g3 h6 38 ♖g2 ♖h7 39 ♖d8 ♜g8 40 ♜xg8 ♖xg8 41 ♜xe3 ♜xc7 42 ♜a3 ♖f7 43 ♜a6 g6 0-1

Game 51 Djurhuus-Blees Gausdal 1993

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 d4
exd4 5 0-0 ♖xe4 6 ♜e1 d5 7 ♖xd5
♖xd5 8 ♖c3 ♖a5



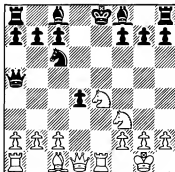
This is the most popular route to equality.

9 ♖xe4

There are no serious alternatives:

a) 9 ♖xe4+?! ♜e6 10 ♖xd4 0-0-0 leaves White struggling to equalise after 11 ♜c3 ♖xd4 12 ♖xd4 ♖b4 (12...♜a3!? also looks good) 13 ♖c4 ♖xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♜d8 Black is better, because of the tactical trick 15 ♖xg7 ♖xa2!

b) 9 ♖xd4? ♖xd4 10 ♖xd4 f5 11 ♖h6!? (not 11 ♖xe4?? ♖xe1 mate or 11 f3?? ♜c5, while if 11 ♖g5 ♖f7! 12 ♖xe4 fxe4 wins, or 11 ♖d2 ♖c5 12 ♖a4 ♖f7! 13 ♖xe4 fxe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖c6 and Black kept the piece in Volkov-Mazurenko, USSR 1955) 11...♖d7! (not now 11...♖f7? 12 ♖xe4 fxe4 13 ♖xe4 ♖b6 14 ♜f4+ ♖g6 15 ♖e5 1-0 Cappello-Lucidi, corr. 1953; after 15...♖xh6 16 ♖h4+ ♖g6 17 ♖h5+ ♖f6 18 ♜f4+ ♖e7 19 ♜e1+ ♜c6 20 ♖f7+ ♖d8 21 ♖xe6 ♖d6 22 ♖xg7 wins) 12 ♖xe4 0-0-0! 13 ♖g5 (if 13 ♖d2 ♖a4!) 13...fxe4 14 ♖xd8 ♜c5 15 ♖xg7 ♖xd8 and Black was clearly better in Blomquist-Muir, corr. 1991. This is an important lesson: rather than going for material gains, Black defends through developing his pieces and this way ends up with two bishops and better co-ordination.



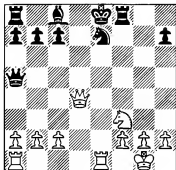
9...♜e6

9...♜e7?! is an old mistake, answered by 10 ♖g5! and then:

a) 10...♜c6 11 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 12 ♖eg5! (2 ♖xd4 0-0 13 ♖c5 ♖c6 14 ♖e5 ♖xc5 15 ♖xc5 ♖xe5 16 ♖xe5 is only equal) 12...0-0

13 ♖xe6 fxe6 14 ♖xd4 and White is better because of the weak pawn on e6.

b) 10...f6?! is risky because of 11 ♖xf6+ gxf6 12 ♖xf6 ♖f8 (12...♖g8 13 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 14 ♖e2 ♖b4 15 ♖c1 and the attack against the black king cannot be parried, as there are no pieces who can come to his rescue) 13 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 14 ♖xd4 and White has fantastic compensation for the piece.



Now Black has:

a) 14...♖f5 15 ♖e5 ♖b6 16 ♖ae1 ♖f7 17 ♖xb6! (not 17 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 18 ♖h8+ ♖f7 19 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 20 ♖xa8 ♖xb2 and the position is very unclear) 17...axb6 18 ♖g5 ♖g7 19 ♖xf5 and White wins.

b) 14...♖b6 15 ♖e5 ♖f6 16 ♖xc7 ♖g8 (if 16...♖g4 17 ♖e5! ♖xf2+ 18 ♖h1 and White wins) 17 ♖e3 ♖h3 18 g3 ♖f8 19 ♖ae1 ♖g7 20 ♖xb7 with a clear advantage to White, Gayson-Howell, British Championship 1989.

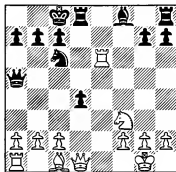
c) 14...♖xf3! (Black needs to get rid of the attacking white pieces in order to survive) 15 gx3 ♖g5+ 16 ♖h1 ♖f7 17 ♖c4+ ♖d5 18 ♖e4 ♖f5 19 ♖ad1 ♖xe4 20 fxe4 ♖f4 21 ♖d8 and White is clearly better.

10...eg5

10 ♖g5? is met strongly by 10...h6 11 ♖h4 ♖b4! (now the black king has the f8-square, which is very useful in many variations) 12 ♖e2 g5 13 c3 (if 13 ♖f6+ ♖e7! 14 a3 ♖d6 15 b4 ♖f5 wins, while after 13 a3 ♖e7 14 b4 ♖d5 15 ♖g3 0-0-0 Black was a clear pawn up in Medina-Keres, Madrid

1943) 13...♖e7! (better than 13...dxc3 14 bxc3 as the opening of the files is in White's favour) 14 ♖g3 0-0-0! when White is under pressure, as illustrated by 15 ♖xd4 ♖b6 16 ♖d2 ♖xd4 17 cxd4 f5 18 d5 fxe4 19 dxe6 c3! 20 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 21 ♖f3 ♖d3! and White is truly struggling to keep his position together.

10...0-0-0 11 ♖xe6 fxe6 12 ♖xe6



This is a critical position for the system. Now Black has four moves: 12...h6 (as in the game), 12...♖f5 (usually transposing to 12...h6 – see below), 12...♖e7! (see the next note), and the probable best move 12...♖d6 (Game 52).

12...h6

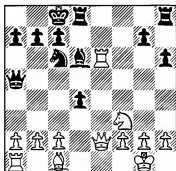
This move prevents ♖c1-g5 and prepares an attack on the white king with ...g7-g5. But it is somewhat slow. White now has real chances for getting an advantage.

A better method is 12...♖e7! which is another living inheritance from Akiba Rubinstein. Keres once said that if a recommendation was given by Rubinstein or Alekhine, you can always play it. Black wants to continue ...♖f6 and defend the d4-pawn without creating a weakness (...h7-h6 and ...g7-g5) on the kingside. It is a very safe plan, and though 12...♖e7 is not very popular at the moment, you can use it to receive a nice and original game; e.g. 13 ♖e5 (if 13 ♖e2 ♖f6 14 ♖f4 ♖f5 15 ♖g3 d3 16 cxd3 ♖xd3 with complete equality in Kabanov-Sofronie, Tchrighiol 1998) 13...♖xe5 14 ♖xe7 ♖d7

(or 14...♖de8!? 15 ♔d2 ♖b6 16 ♜xg7 ♖f6 17 ♜g3 ♜h8 with compensation for the pawn) 15 ♜xd7 ♝xd7 16 ♔f4 ♜e8 and Black was at least equal in Blauert-Van der Sterren, Groningen 1989.

13 ♖e2 ♔d6

The position after 13...♖f5 often arises after 12...♖f5 13 ♖e2 h6. The idea is simply that White cannot play 14 ♔d2 because of 14...♖xc2. Instead after 14 ♔e4 g5 15 ♔d2 ♔g7 (15...♜h7!? looks like an interesting new idea; Black can play either ...♜c7 or ...♜f7 on the next move, both of which seem fully satisfactory) 16 ♚e1 ♔f6 17 h3 (this looks risky, but it works!) 17...h5 18 h4! g4 19 ♝g5 and White is slightly better.



14 h3!?

White simply loses time with this move – and when ...g5-g4 comes, it comes more strongly. The best move was 14 ♔d2! when Black has:

a) 14...♖h5!? 15 ♖e4! looks better for White. At least he should not fall for 15 ♚e1? d3! (a typical tactic in this line) 16 ♖e4 (16 ♖xd3?? ♔xh2+ and 16 cxd3?? ♝d4 both win for Black) 16...dxc2 and Black is slightly better.

b) 14...♖f5 15 ♔e4 (if 15 ♖e4 ♖xe4 16 ♜xe4 ♜he8 17 ♚a1 ♜xe4 18 ♜xe4 ♔e7 followed by ...♔f6 and Black has a well tenable position) 15...g5 and then:

b1) 16 h3?! is given by Pálkövi with the assessment that White is slightly better. In my

opinion Black is better after 16 h3, e.g. 16...♜hg8 17 ♚e1 h5 18 ♖d3 g4 19 ♝xd4 ♝xd4 20 ♜xd4 ♖f6 with full compensation for the pawn, and his position is easy to play. As in the main game, with h2-h3 White creates a weakness in his own camp – without Black putting any pressure on him to do so!

b2) 16 ♚e1 ♜h8 17 a3 ♖b8 18 b4 and White is slightly better; e.g. 18...g4 19 ♝h4 ♖f6 20 ♜g4 ♜g8 21 ♜xg8 ♔xh2+ 22 ♝h1! ♜xg8 23 ♖e6 and the weakness of h6 will probably decide the game in White's favour.

14...♖f5 15 a3

Black has the initiative after 15 ♜e4 g5! 16 ♔d2 ♜hg8.

15...♔d7!?

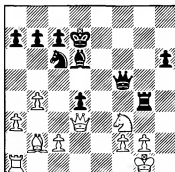
Black wants an endgame. 15...g5 was also interesting, and if White plays 16 b4 Black can follow 16...♔d7 17 ♜e4 ♜de8 18 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 19 ♖d1 ♜e4 transposing to the game.

16 ♚e4 ♜de8 17 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 18 ♖d1

Forced. After 18 ♖d3 ♖xd3 19 cxd3 ♝a5! (the weakness of b3 is here exploited to the maximum) 20 b4 (if 20 ♔d2 ♝b3 21 ♚d1 c5 and Black has a big advantage; he will play ...♔c6-d5 and then ...b7-b5 and ...c5-c4 with strong pressure on the queenside) 20...♝b3 21 ♚b1 ♝xc1 22 ♜xc1 ♜e2! 23 ♝xd4 ♚d2 24 ♝b5 ♜xd3 and the endgame is very uncomfortable for White.

18...♚e4 19 b4 g5

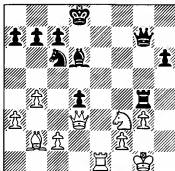
Possible was 19...a6!? with unclear play. 20 ♔b2 g4 21 hxg4 ♜xg4 22 ♖d3



22... ♖f6?

Black overestimates the power of his own attack and underestimates the weakness of the d-pawn. Instead, after 22... ♗xd3 23 cxd3 b5 24 ♖e1 h5! Black is completely OK in the endgame.

23 ♖e1 ♗g7 24 g3 ♘d8



25 ♖e4!

By exchanging rooks White eliminates all Black's counterplay.

25... ♗e5

After 25... ♗g6 26 ♖xg4 ♗xg4 27 ♗xd4 ♗e5 28 ♗f5 White simply has a pawn more. 25... ♗g6 26 ♗xd4 (or 26 b5) does not improve anything either.

26 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 27 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 28 ♖xg4 ♗xg4 29 c3 ♘e7 30 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 31 cxd4

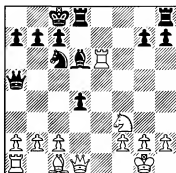
A pawn ending with a pawn less is almost always lost.

31... ♘e6 32 f4 ♘f5 33 ♖g2 ♘e4 34 ♖h3 a5

Or 34... ♘xd4 35 ♖g4 ♘e4 36 ♖h5 ♘f5 37 ♖xh6 c6 38 ♖h5 b6 39 g4+ ♘f6 40 ♖h6 and wins.

35 ♖g4 axb4 36 axb4 ♘xd4 37 ♖h5 b5 38 f5 1-0

♗f6 5 0-0 ♗xe4 6 ♖e1 d5 7 ♗xd5 ♗xd5
8 ♗c3 ♗a5 9 ♗xe4 ♗e6 10 ♗eg5 0-0-0
11 ♗xe6 fxe6 12 ♖xe6 ♗d6



The most popular, and probably best move.

13 ♖e2

The alternative is 13 ♗g5 ♖de8 14 ♖e2 ♘d7 15 ♖xe8 (15 ♖e4 is also equal) 15... ♖xe8 16 ♗d3 h6 17 ♗d2 ♖h5 18 g3 ♖g4 19 ♖e1 ♖f8 20 ♖g2 ♖f5 with equality in Berend-Potapov, Pardubice 1997. Note that 15... ♖e1? is a mistake because of 15... ♖xe1+! 16 ♗xe1 ♖xe6 17 ♖g4 ♖he8 and Black is clearly better.

An important little sideline is 14 ♖e1!, which leads to a draw after 14... ♖xe1+ 15 ♖axel ♖xe6 16 ♖xe6 ♘d7 17 ♖e4 ♖e8 18 ♖xe8 ♘xe8 19 ♘f1 ♘f7 20 ♗d2 h6 21 ♘e2 ♘e6 22 ♘d3 ♘d5 23 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 24 c4+ ♘e6! (a very important move; for some reason John Emms missed this in his book *Play the Open Games as Black*, and was very concerned about this line for Black, since the alternative 24... ♘c5? 25 f4+ ♘f5 26 ♗xd4 ♗xf4 27 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 28 b4 is close to being lost) 25 ♗xd4 ♗e5+ 26 ♘e4 ♗xb2 and Black was no worse in Hacat-Hughey, Edmonton 2000.

13... ♖h5 14 ♖e4

The alternatives are worse:

a) 14 ♗d2? d3! (a tactic revisited from the notes to Game 51) 15 ♖c3 (once more 15 cxd3?? ♗d4 or 15 ♗xd3?? ♗xh2+ wins)

Game 52

Kamsky-Ye Rongguang

Manila 1990

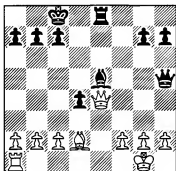
1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 ♗c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♗c4

15...dxc2 and Black is better.

b) 14 ♖g5? d3! (again) when 15 ♜e3 can be met by several good moves; one is 15...d4! 16 ♜xd6 (forced) 16...♜xd6 17 d4 ♜e8 18 ♜f4 ♜d5 19 d3 d2 20 ♜d1 ♜xg5! 21 ♜xg5 ♜xg5 22 ♜xd2 ♜g4 and Black has excellent winning chances.

c) 14 h3! avoids the ...d4-d3 trick, but it loses time as well as weakening the kingside. After 14...♜de8 15 ♖d2 d5 16 ♜xe8+ ♜xe8 17 d4 ♜xe2 18 dxe2 d4 19 ♖e3 dxb2 20 ♖f1 d4 and Black is now very slightly better.

14...♜de8 15 ♖d2! d5 16 ♜xe8+ ♜xe8
17 d4 ♖e5 ♖xe5



After this Black has a very small advantage. Instead 17...♜xe5 18 ♜d3 ♜e2 19 ♜xe2 ♜xe2 20 ♜d1 ♖d7 21 ♖f1 is completely equal.

18 f4

18 ♖f4! ♖xf4 19 ♜xf4 ♜e5 20 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 21 ♖f1 is equal; Black has nothing after 21...♜c5 22 ♜c1 d3! 23 c4. But 18...♖f6! 19 ♜d3 ♜e2 puts White under some pressure.

18...♖d6 19 ♜d3 g6 20 ♜f1!

This is not really a mistake. White's mistake is his whole strategy here. He plays waiting moves without any plan at all. This is one of the worst things you can do in chess. Even a bad plan is often preferable to playing without any plan at all. Better was 20 b4 ♜d5 21 c4 ♜e4 22 ♜h3+ ♜f5 23 ♜xf5+ gxf5 24

♖f2 with an equal endgame.

20...b6 21 h3 a5 22 a4 ♜d5 23 b3 ♜e4
24 ♜f3 ♖b8 25 ♜f2 ♜e6 26 ♖f1?

This loses a pawn to a simple tactic. 26 g4! was a good move for active counterplay.
26...♖xf4!

Since if 27 ♖xf4?? ♜e1 mate.

27 ♜d3 g5 28 ♜f3 ♖xd2 29 ♜xd2 h6 30 ♜f2 ♜e5 31 ♜f8+ ♖a7 32 ♜f3 ♜e1+ 33 ♖f2 ♜e3+ 34 ♖g3 ♜e5+

Also possible was 34...♜xf3+ 35 ♜xf3 ♖b7! (you cannot win an ending without the king) 36 ♜f6 ♜e2 37 ♜xh6 ♜xc2 and Black wins.

35 ♖g4

If instead 35 ♖f2 then 35...♜e3+ 36 ♖g3 ♜xf3+ etc.

35...♜e4+ 36 ♖h5 g4+ 37 ♜f5 g4h3 38 g4h3 ♜e7

The rook ending should also be winning, but it is stronger for Black to continue the attack.

39 ♜f6 ♜e5+ 40 ♖h4 ♜e4+

A draw is not the agenda. Black repeats the position simply in order to reach the time control, after which he can work out the win at leisure.

41 ♖h5 ♜e5+ 42 ♖h4 ♜c5! 43 ♜f3 ♜e4+ 44 ♖g3 ♜e5+ 45 ♖g2 ♜g5+ 46 ♖f2 ♜d2+ 47 ♖g3 ♜e1+ 48 ♜f2 ♜e3+ 49 ♖h4 ♜h1 50 ♜f1 ♜h2 51 ♜g8 ♜e4+ 52 ♖h5 ♜e5+ 53 ♖xh6 ♜h4+ 54 ♖g6 ♜g3+ 55 ♖f7 ♜h7+ 0-1

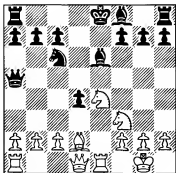
Game 53

Bachler-Colias

USA 1991

1 e4 e5 2 d3 d6 3 ♖c4 d6 4 d4
exd4 5 0-0 dxe4 6 ♜e1 d5 7 ♖xd5
♜xd5 8 dxc3 ♜a5 9 dxe4 ♖e6 10 ♖d2!?

This is the modern attempt to squeeze something out of the position. It is clearly more dangerous for Black than 10 d2g5. Therefore it is important to prepare against it.

**10...Wf5!**

This is a risky, but playable move. The main line with 10...Wf5! is seen in Game 54, while 10...Wf5 11 g5 transposes to 8...Wh5 9 Qxe4 e6 10 g5 in Games 49 & 50. Black has also tried:

a) 10...Wb6?! (misplacing the queen) 11 g5 h6 12 e4 e7 (not 12...g5?! 13 Qf6+ Qd8 14 e3 with a dangerous attack in A.Geller-Neishtadt, Leningrad 1956) 13 e7 Qxe7 14 b4! and White has a strong initiative. It will take a long time before Black will get his king into safety; e.g. 14...Mad8 (or 14...Wxb4 15 Mb1 Wc4 16 Qxb7 and White has more than enough compensation for the pawn in Tringov-Lilienthal, Sofia 1962) 15 Qc5 Mhe8 (or 15...Qxb4 16 Qxe6 fxe6 17 Qe5 with excellent compensation) 16 Qxe6 fxe6 17 Wd3 Qxb4 18 Wg6 Qd6 19 Mab1 Wc5 20 Qxd4 with a very strong attack in Djonev-Radulov, Bulgaria 1991.

b) 10...Wd5 (this also seems quite safe) 11 g5 and now:

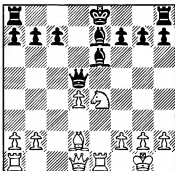
b1) 11...e6 12 e6 0-0 13 Qxd4 Qxd4 14 Wxd4 Wxd4 15 Qxd4 Qd8 16 Qxd6 Qxd6 17 e3 with a likely draw, unless true fighters take over.

b2) 11...e7?! (to play a move like this you need to have the psyche of Victor Korchnoi; objectively it is a normal move, but in real life it means that you will spend the next 20 moves under heavy attack; therefore it is only for connoisseurs!) 12 e7

Qxe7 13 c4 Wxc4 (or 13...dxc3 14 Wc2 with compensation) 14 Mc1 Wd5 15 Mc5 Wd7 16 Wc1 with good attacking chances for the pawn.

b3) 11...e4?! 12 c3 e4 13 b4 e6 14 a4 a6 15 e6! (better than 15 b5? axb5 16 axb5 Qa5 as in Fette-Steczowski, Copenhagen 1985) 15...0-0 16 a5 e7 17 Qxd4 fe8 18 Qxc6 Wxc6 19 Wh5! Wb5! with an unclear position in Weber-Grzelak, corr. 1992. But not 19...h6? 20 e7! Qxg7 21 Wc5+ Qh7 22 Qf6+ Qg6 23 h4 and White has a strong attack.

c) 10...e4 (another solid equaliser) 11 Qxd4 (if 11 c3? dxc3 12 bxc3 e7 13 c4 Wd6 14 e5! Md8 15 Wb1 0-0 16 e7 Qxc7 17 Qc5 Wxc4 18 Qxc6 fxe6 19 Qxb7 Qd5 20 Wxa7 was level in Bielczyk-Panczyk, Polish Championship 1982) 11...Qxd4 12 c3 e7! (safest, though both 12...0-0-0 and 12...0-0 are also playable) 13 cxd4 Wd5 and then:



c1) 14 Mc1?! c6 15 e5 e5 16 Mc5 Wxa2! 17 Mxg5 (17 Qxg5 0-0-0 18 Qxe6 fxe6 is no improvement) 17...0-0-0 18 Wd2 Md5 19 Wb4 Mxg5 20 Qxg5 Wc4 and Black was slightly better in Sorensen-Palciauskas, corr. 1978-83.

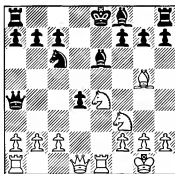
c2) 14 e4 c6 15 Qc3 Wd7 (or 15...Wf5 16 d5 Wxf4 17 dxe6 0-0) 16 Wd4 b5 17 Wc2 0-0 18 Mad1 Mfe8 with a level position in Vesovic-Kretschmar, corr. 1980.

c3) 14 e4 Qxb4 15 Wa4+ Wc6 16 Wxb4

0-0-0 17 ♖ac1 (17 ♗c3 ♖b6 18 ♖xb6 axb6 19 ♖ad1 c6 is also level, but worse seems 17 ♗c5?! ♗d5 18 ♖ac1 ♖g6 19 ♗g3 ♖b6 when Black has the better chances due to the weak light squares and the prospect of ...h5-h4) 17...♖b6 18 ♖c3 ♖xd4 19 ♗c5 ♖hd8 20 ♗xe6 fxe6 21 ♖xc6 ♖d1+ 22 ♖c1 and a draw was agreed in Radulov-Smejkal, Raach 1969.

11 ♗g5!

11 b3 ♖a3 12 ♗c1 ♖a5 13 ♗d2 has also been played. Now 13...♖a3 is the best, but also a sad solution – a draw. It is always a pity that if you want play for a win, you can end up being forced to take very risky decisions. Here if Black wants to fight for a win he must try the risky 13...♖f5?! 14 ♗g5 ♗b4 15 ♗xd4! ♗xd4 16 ♖xd4 ♗xe1 17 ♖xg7 ♖xe4 (after 17...♗xf2+?! 18 ♗xf2 ♗f8 19 ♖e1 f6 20 ♗f4 ♖c8 21 g4 ♖d5 22 ♖xh7 White has more than enough compensation for the exchange) 18 ♖xh8+ ♗d7 19 ♖xa8 ♗xf2+! 20 ♗xf2 ♖d4+ 21 ♗c3 ♖f6+ 22 ♗c2 ♖xa1 23 ♖xa7 ♖c3 and Black had good chances for a draw in Skachkov-Yandemirov, USA 1991, which in the end he managed to achieve. Nevertheless, in a later game between the same players Black took the draw by repetition after 13...♖a3!



11...♗b4?

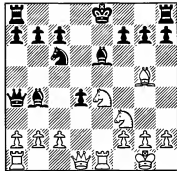
This leads more or less to a lost position. Necessary was 11...h6 12 ♗h4 and now:

a) 12...♗b4 13 ♗xd4! (a new move but similar to the game; after 13 ♖e2? g5 14

♗f6+ ♗f8 15 ♗g3 ♗e7 16 ♗e4 ♖d8 17 ♗e5 ♖b5 18 ♗d3 ♖d7 19 ♖f1 h5 Black was much better in Estrin-I.Zaitsev, USSR 1983) 13...♗xe1 14 ♗xc6 ♖xe4 (not 14...fxc6?? 15 ♗c5! and wins) 15 ♗xc7+ ♗f8 16 ♗xa8 ♗b4 17 ♗g3 and White is much better.

b) 12...♖b4?! 13 a3 ♖xb2 14 ♖b1 ♖xa3 15 ♗xd4 and White has terrific compensation.

c) 12...g5 13 ♗f6+ ♗e7 14 ♗d5+ ♗d8 15 ♗c3 ♖c4 16 ♗g3 ♗g7 17 ♗e5 ♗xc5 18 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 19 ♖xe5 with compensation for the pawn. This line can of course be discussed. Maybe White should invest more energy in the attack and have fewer material constraints.



12 ♗xd4!

A typical tactic for this variation, which was practically forced here. After 12 c3 ♖xd1 13 ♖axd1 dxc3 14 bxc3 ♗a3 15 ♗f4 0-0 Black is slightly better.

12...♗xe1 13 ♗xe6 fxe6

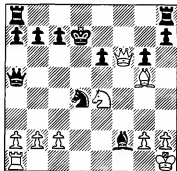
Black is forced to do this, either here or after 13...♗xf2+ 14 ♗h1 fxe6 when 15 ♖h5+ g6 16 ♖g4 transposes to the game. If 13...♖xe4? 14 ♗xc7+ ♗f8 15 ♗xa8 ♗xf2+ (or 15...♗a5 16 ♖d7) 16 ♗xf2 ♖f5+ 17 ♗g1 ♖xg5 18 ♖d7 ♖e7 19 ♖c8+ and White is clearly better.

14 ♖h5+ g6 15 ♖g4 ♗xf2+ 16 ♗h1!

White is a rook down, but the situation for Black is not easy at all.

16...♗d4 17 ♖f4!

Targeting the black king. 17 Qxf2? gives Black what he needs most of all... time. After 17... f8 18 e3 (if 18 Qd3? Wxa2! wins) 18...0-0 19 c3 h5 20 Wh4 Wc2 21 cxd4 We2 22 Wh3 Wxf2 23 exf2 Wxf2 24 Wxc6+ Wb8 Black has a wonderful major piece endgame. The white king is in danger from ...h4-h3 and the excellently placed black queen. 17... Wa5 18 Wf6 Qd7



19 Wxf2?

Here 19 Qxf2! was correct – then if 19... ac6? 20 Wxd4 Wxg5 21 Qd3 and the black king cannot escape (e.g. 21...b6 22 Qb4+ Wb7 23 We4+ and wins), or 19... Qf5 20 b4! Wxb4 21 Qd1+ Wc6 22 Qd3 Wa3 23 Wxc6+ Qd6 24 Qe5+ Wb5 25 Wxd6! Wxd6 (or 25... cxd6 26 Wc4+ Wb6 27 Qd7+ Wa5 28 Qd2+ mates) 26 a4+ Wa5 27 Qc4+ and wins, while after 19... Wd5 20 c4! Wd6 21 Qe4 Wb6 22 Qd1 White regains the material with a clear advantage.

19... Qf5 20 Qd1+ Wc8 21 g4

White still has some compensation which perhaps is enough for a draw, but should never offer anything more.

21... Wb6?

A tactical blunder. Instead after 21... Qd6! 22 Wd4 Qe8 Black seems to ride out the storm; e.g. 23 c4 e5 (not 23...b6? 24 Qxd6+ cxd6 25 Wxd6 Wb7 26 Wd7+ Wa6 27 Qc7 Qxe7 28 Wxe7 and White is much better because of the weak black king) 24 Qd3 (or 24 Qxd6+ cxd6 25 Wxd6 Wc7) 24... Wa6! and

White will be very happy if he makes a draw.

22 Wd2! Qd6

If 22... Wd4 23 Wxd4 Qxd4 24 Wxd4 White should win the endgame.

23 Wc3 Qd7

Or 23... f8 24 Qxd6+ Wb8 25 Qe4 and wins.

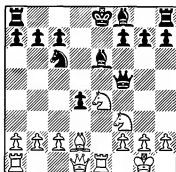
24 Qc5+ Wc6 25 Qa4+ 1-0

Game 54

Weber-Grzelak

Correspondence 1992

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Qc4 Qf6 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 Qxe4 6 Qe1 d5 7 Qxd5 Wxd5 8 Qc3 Wa5 9 Qxe4 Qe6 10 Qd2 Wf5



This gives Black safe play.

11 Qg5 h6

Black has two alternatives. One decent and one indecent:

a) 11... Qd6 12 Qxd4 Qxd4 13 Wxd4 0-0 14 Qxd6 Wxg5 15 Qe4 Wd5 and a draw was agreed in Sveshnikov-Geller, Sochi 1983.

b) 11... Qc5? 12 Qh4! wins material after 12... Wd5 13 c4! We5 (13... Wxc4 14 Qc1 Wxa2 15 Qxc5 was Baird-Halprin, Vienna 1898) 14 f4 d3+ 15 Wh1 Wd4 16 Qf3 Wxc4 17 Qc1 , or 12... We5 13 f4 Qd5 14 f5 d3+ 15 Qxc5 Wxc5+ 16 Qe3 Wc4 17 fxe6 because of 17... Wxh4 18 cxf7+ Qxf7 19 Wf3+ Wf6 20 Wd5+ Qg6 21 Qf1 and, unfortunately, Black is toasted.

12 ♖h4

12 ♖d3? is well met by 12...♗a5! 13 ♖d2? if 13 ♖h4 g5 14 ♖g3 0-0-0 and Black is clearly better) 13...♗a6!! and Black is a pawn up for no compensation. The doubled pawns after 14 ♗xa6 bxa6 would not matter as they cannot be attacked; more important is that Black has the two bishops.

12...♗c5

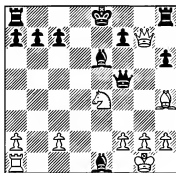
Nor 12...g5?? 13 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♗xd4 and White wins.

13 b4!

The only way of breathing life into the position.

13...♗xb4

For those players who do not dance, I can recommend 13...♖b6 14 a4 a5 15 b5 ♖b4 16 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 17 ♗xd4 0-0 when the game is completely equal.

14 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♖xe1 16 ♗xg7**16...♖xf2+!**

Black should shake things up. Terrible is 16...♖d7? 17 ♗xe1 b6 (or 17...b5 18 ♗d4+ ♖c6 19 ♖f6 ♗hc8 20 ♖e5! with a very strong attack in Vytopil-Kelstrup, corr. 1966) 18 ♗c3 ♗ad8 19 f3 ♖c8 20 ♖g3 and White was much better in Maliakin-Timoshenko, Katowice 1992. Note that the opposite-coloured bishops favour the player who has sacrificed the exchange. Since Black cannot force any further exchanges, the white pieces can roam the board without being matched.

17 ♖xf2 ♖d7

17...♗f8!? is untested and dangerous, but if you want to win in chess you need to run some risks. Then again, after 18 ♗d4 ♗xc2 19 ♖e4 ♗g8 20 ♖f6+ ♖f8 White has a draw all the same with 21 ♖h7+! ♗xh7 22 ♗c5+ ♖g7 23 ♗e5+ ♖g6 24 ♗f1! ♗g7 25 ♖f6 ♗f8 26 ♗e4+ ♖h5 27 ♗h4+ ♖g6 28 ♗e4+ etc. White cannot win but he does have a more attractive draw with 27 ♗f5+? ♖xf5 28 ♗xf5+ ♗g5 29 g4+ ♖h4 30 ♖xg5+ hxg5 31 ♖g2! threatening 32 h3 or 32 ♗f3 and mates, thus forcing Black to play the continuation 31...♗a3 (31...♗c8) when perpetual follows by 32 ♗h7+ ♖xg4 33 ♗e4+ ♖h5 34 ♗h7+ etc.

18 ♗d1+ ♖c6 19 ♗c3+ ♗c5 20 ♗f3+ ♖d5 21 ♗f6+ ♖e6

21...♖b5 22 ♗b2+ ♖c6 also draws, but not 22...♖a6?? 23 ♗d4! ♖c4 24 ♖e4 with a decisive attack.

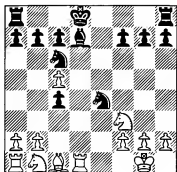
22 ♗f3+ ♖d5

Nor now 22...♖b5?? since after 23 ♖e7! ♗xc7 24 ♗b1+ ♖a4 25 ♗f4+ ♖a5 26 ♗d2+ ♖a4 27 ♗d4+ ♖a5 28 ♗c3+ ♖a4 29 ♖d3 Black soon will find himself mated.

23 ♗f6+ ½-½*Game 55***Leygue-Flear***St. Affrique 2001***1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 ♖c5 6 e5**

6 c3!? transposes to the Italian Game, where 3 ♖c4 ♖c5 4 c3 ♖f6 5 d4 exd4 6 0-0? is the most usual move order. But we can have a short look all the same: 6...♖xe4! (the only serious move; 6...dxc3 gives White good compensation in more than one way, and 6...0-0 7 cxd4 gives Black a lot of problems) 7 cxd4 d5! (the point; without this move the gambit would be rather dangerous) 8 dxc5 dxc4 9 ♗xd8+ (or 9 ♗e2 ♗d3! 10 ♗c1 f5 11 ♖bd2 0-0 12 ♖xe4 fxe4 13 ♗xe4 ♖f5 14 ♗f4 ♗ac8 and Black is no worse) 9...♖xd8 (worse is 9...♖xd8?! 10 ♗e1 f5 11

♖c3 0-0 12 ♖xc4 fxc4 13 ♙xc4 ♗e6 14 ♖d4 ♗d5 15 ♙e5 c6 16 ♗d2 and White is better) and this ending should be equal. White will get some fast moves, but he is a pawn down and with the queens off the board, there is no real attack. After 10 ♗d1+ ♗d7 we have:

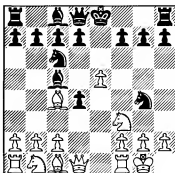


a) 11 ♖g5 ♖xg5 12 ♗xg5+ f6 13 ♗e3 (13 ♗f4? is a possible improvement according to some annotators, but 13...♖b4 14 ♖a3 ♖d3 seems more than fine for Black, though the position is not completely clear) 13...♗e7 14 ♖a3 ♗e6 15 ♗ac1? (White could have kept the balance with 15 ♖b5! ♗hc8 16 ♗f4 ♖e5 and Black is hardly any better) 15...♖e5 16 ♗c3 ♗hd8 17 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 18 h3 ♗d1+ 19 ♗h2 ♗a1! 20 f4 ♖c6 21 ♖xc4 ♗xa2 22 ♗c1 ♖d4 23 ♗e3 ♗f7 24 ♖d2 ♗a1 25 ♗c1 ♗d5 26 g4 ♖e2! 27 ♗xe2 ♗xc1 28 b4 a5 0-1 Jablonsky-Konikowsky, Poland-Germany 1991.

b) 11 ♗e3 ♗e7 (also possible is 11...♗c8 12 ♗c1 ♗e6 13 ♖a3 c3 14 bxc3 b6 with equality) 12 ♖a3 ♗e6 13 ♖b5 ♗hc8 14 ♖g5 ♖xg5 15 ♗xg5+! f6 16 ♗f4 ♖e5 (the position is level) 17 ♗xe5 (not 17 ♗e1? ♖d3 and Black won in Petronis-Kreuzer, corr. 1988-90) 17...fxc5 18 ♗e1 ♗f6 19 ♗e3 ♗d7 20 ♖c3 ♗c6 with equal play in Estrin-Krzyszton, corr. 1972-75.

6...♖g4?!

The logical and normal 6...d5 is considered in Games 56 & 57.



7 ♗f4!

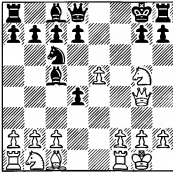
White strengthens the centre and prepares to irritate the misplaced black knight. Besides this obvious and sound move, he has a wide range of alternatives:

a) 7 ♗e1? d3 and White is in trouble.

b) 7 ♗g5?! ♗e7 8 ♗f4 is no clear improvement, Black can play either 8...f6 9 exf6 ♖xf6 10 ♖xd4 ♖xd4 11 ♗xd4 d5 with equality, or try the mad-looking 8...g5! ♖xg5 (9 ♗g3 h5 10 ♖xd4 ♖xc5 seems to favour Black as White will have to trade off his dark-squared bishop next) 9...d5! 10 exd6 ♗xg5 11 ♗e1+ ♗f8 12 dxc7 ♗f6 and White does not have enough for the piece. One important thing to note is that after 13 ♗xg5 Black should attack with 13...♗xf2+ 14 ♗h1 ♗g8! as White cannot save the bishop; 15...♗h4 follows if the bishop moves away, while on 15 ♗f1 (or 15 ♗d2) comes simply 15...♗xg5! winning.

c) 7 c3 d5 is safe for Black (even 7...dxc3 could be considered here) 8 ♗b5 (8 ♗b3 dxc3 9 ♖xc3 0-0 10 ♗f4 gives an unclear game in which Black is at least not worse) 8...dxc3 9 ♖xc3 (too optimistic is 9 ♗a4? 0-0 10 ♗xc6 bxc6 11 ♗xc6 cxb2 12 ♗xb2 ♗b8 13 ♗xc5 ♗xb2 and Black is slightly better) 9...0-0! and 10 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 11 ♖xd5 ♖gxc5 12 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 13 ♖xc7 ♗b8 14 ♗f4 ♗d6 is equal. The threat of ...♖f3+ gives Black time to avoid any bad side effects of being pinned.

d) 7 ♖xf7+? is a very interesting move which, unfortunately (or thank God), is not well known. After 7...♗xf7 8 ♕g5+ ♗g8 (if 8...♗e8 9 ♗xg4 ♕xc5 10 ♗g3 with a dangerous initiative) 9 ♗xg4 then:



d1) 9...♕xc5 10 ♗g3 and White has compensation for the pawn. The game could continue 10...d6 11 ♖e1 ♗d7 (not 11...♕f7? 12 b4 ♖b6 13 ♗b3! d5 14 ♗xd5! and Black is in trouble, or 11...♗f6? 12 ♕e4 ♗e6 13 f4 and White is close to winning) 12 ♖f4 h6 (after 12...♕g6 13 ♗b3+ d5 14 ♖xc7 White is much better) 13 ♕e4 and White has more than enough compensation for the pawn and is at least slightly better.

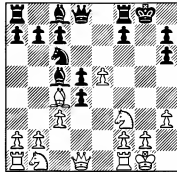
d2) 9...h6! 10 ♗f3 (if 10 ♕f3 d6 11 ♗h5 dxe5 12 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 13 ♗xe5 ♖d6 14 ♗e4 ♗f6 and Black keeps the extra pawn and a good position, though White is not markedly worse after 15 c3!) 10...♗e7 (10...hxg5 11 ♗d5+ ♗h7 12 ♗xc5 is somewhat better for White, as the black king has nowhere to hide) 11 ♗d5+ ♗f8 12 ♕f3 (12 ♕e4 ♖b6 13 ♖f4 ♗f7! gives Black a better endgame with the two bishops) 12...g5 and the game is unclear.

7...0-0

The passive 7...d6 does not really work out: 8 exd6 ♖xd6 9 ♖e1+ ♗f8 10 ♖xd6+ ♗xd6 11 c3 ♗c5 12 ♗e2 ♖d7 13 cxd4 ♗d6 14 ♗d2 h5 15 ♕c3 and White was better in Reid-Will, Scotland 1994. 11...dxc3 12 ♕xc3 ♗xd1 13 ♖axd1 is not a credible alternative either. White has a strong initiative, while

Black has problems developing. After 13...♖f5 14 ♕b5 ♖c8 15 ♖d5 Black would be struggling to keep his bits together; at the minimum he will lose the pawn back, but probably more.

8 h3 ♕h6 9 ♖xh6 gxh6 10 c3 d5



11 ♖d3!

The bishop targets h7 from here, but this gives up a lot of the pressure on the black centre. More standard is 11 ♖b3! ♖f5 (if 11...dxc3? 12 ♕xc3 d4 13 ♕d5 and White has a clear advantage) 12 cxd4 ♖b6 13 ♕c3 ♖e4 14 ♕xe4 (after 14 ♖e1? ♖xf3 15 ♗xf3 ♕xd4 16 ♗g4+ ♗h8 17 ♕xd5 ♖g8 18 ♗e4 ♕xb3 19 axb3 ♖g6 and the position was equal in Lourna-Dobias, Prague 1943) 14...dxe4 15 d5! exf3 16 dxc6 fxg2 17 ♗g4+ ♗g5 18 ♖xg2 bxc6 19 f4 and White has real winning chances in this endgame, especially if he manages to penetrate to the seventh rank and attack f7. Should the f7-pawn fall White would be able to push his two pawns straight to the finishing line. Probably Black's best now is 19...♗xg4+ 20 hxg4 ♖d4 21 ♖ac1 c5 22 ♖h1 ♕g7 23 ♗f3 when White has a strong attack based on ♖c2-h2hx6 assisted by his f-pawn and king.

11...dxc3

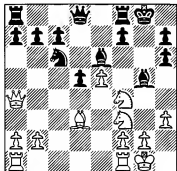
A very risky move. More calm was 11...f6 when White has nothing better than 12 cxd4 ♖xd4 13 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 14 ♖xh7+ ♗xh7 15 ♗xd4 fxe5 (15...♖f5 is also playable) 16 ♗xe5 ♖g8! (or the very solid 16...c6 when

the position is even) 17 ♖h1 ♚g5 18 ♜c2 ♜g6 19 f4 ♙f5 20 ♜d2 with unclear play.

12 ♖xc3 ♙e6 13 ♜e2 ♙e7 14 ♜f4

14 a3! with the idea of ♙c2 and ♜d3 was an interesting plan.

14...♙g5 15 ♜a4?!



White is not playing very actively here and seems to be waiting for Black to make a mistake (which duly appears). Better was 15 ♜h5! f5! (15...♖h8! is also possible, though White is better after 16 ♜xg5 hxg5 17 f4! with attack against the black king) 16 ♜b3 ♜e7 17 ♙ae1 ♖h8 18 ♜xg5 hxg5 19 f4 with good compensation for the pawn. One possible continuation is 19...♜b4! 20 fxg5 ♜xb3 21 axb3 with even chances.

15...d4?

Now the light squares in the black camp will become terribly weak. Black should not have allowed the exchange of the bishop, and especially not by simultaneously opening lines for the white bishop. Instead 15...♙d7! and Black is probably better.

16 ♜xe6 fxe6 17 ♙e4 ♙b8 18 ♙ad1 ♜e8 19 h4!?

If you are the active player in the position, it is usually stronger to keep the pressure on rather than to exchange pieces. Nevertheless, after 19 ♙xc6 ♜xc6 20 ♜xd4 White is also better.

19...♙e7 20 ♜c4 ♜f7 21 b3 ♖h8?!

Black is just waiting for death to come to his door. He has not a lot to lose anymore,

so he should play as risky as possible, simply to change the progression of events. One try is 21...♜b4 22 ♜xc7 ♜xa2 23 ♜xd4 ♜fe8 24 ♜a5 ♜c1 and while White is much better after 25 ♙d7 at least Black has some play.

22 ♙xc6!

Now White exchanges pieces favourably and ruins the black pawn structure at the same time. The position is winning already.

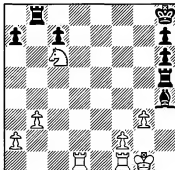
22...bxc6 23 ♜xd4 ♙xh4 24 g3 ♜g8 25 ♜xe6

White would love to play an endgame.

25...♜h5

If 25...♜xe6 26 ♜xe6 ♙be8 27 ♜d4 ♜xe5 28 ♜f3 ♙e4 29 ♜xh4 ♙xh4 30 ♙d7 and White will win this rook ending without too many problems. After the c7-pawn falls, Black will have serious problems with the seventh rank – he can never exchange all the rooks, as the pawn ending will be lost.

26 ♜f5 ♜g5 27 ♜f3 ♜xe5 28 ♜xh5 ♙xh5 29 ♜xc6



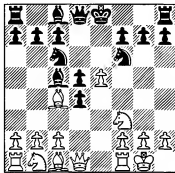
Although material is equal White has a technically winning position. All the black pawns are weak, shattered and isolated and his pieces are completely unco-ordinated. Besides that the black bishop has no future potential, while the white knight is as happy as can be.

29...♜g8 30 ♖g2 ♙f6 31 ♜b4 ♙b5 32 ♜d5 ♙e5 33 ♜fe1 ♙d6 34 ♜e7 ♜f8 35 ♜d5 ♙c5 36 ♜e3 ♙c3 37 ♙e2 ♜f7 38 ♜c4 ♙d7 39 ♙d5 ♙d8 40 ♙a5 ♜f8 41

♟xd6 cxd6 42 ♖xa7 ♗cf3 43 ♗d7 1-0

Game 56
Steinitz-Meitner
Vienna 1860

1 e4 e5 2 ♟f3 ♟c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♖c4
♙c5 5 0-0 ♟f6 6 e5 d5!



This is far more logical than 6...♟g4. In my humble view, if you want to play the black side of the Max Lange Attack, this is the key move to justify doing so. And besides, after this you should be able to find some interesting blank spots on the map and fill them up with your own analysis. Remember that this line was popular 100 years ago. This means that not only have the lines have never been properly computer checked, but also that as chess has changed so radically such a dynamic position as this can be viewed from a new perspective. For example, it has only been really understood in the last 50 years how much compensation it is possible to have for an exchange sacrifice. And since Kasparov there has been a completely different understanding of the initiative. All of this can assist you tremendously in analysing and/or playing this line.

7 exf6

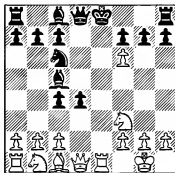
This is the move that is characteristic for the Max Lange Attack. 7 ♖b5 ♟c4 8 ♟xd4 transposes to Chapter 7, though White is now committed to the 8 0-0 line (Game 43).

7...dxc4

In my opinion this position is at least equal for Black. The two pawns on d4 and c4 give Black a very strong centre.

8 ♖e1+

Inferior is 8 fxg7?! ♗g8 9 ♙g5 ♙e7 10 ♙xc7 ♙xc7 11 ♖bd2 ♗xg7, e.g. 12 ♟xc4 ♙c6 13 ♖e1 ♟f8 and Black was somewhat better in Foltys-Stulik, Czechoslovakia 1940.



8...♙e6

8...♟f8!? is risky after 9 ♙g5 gxf6 10 ♖h6+ ♟g8 11 ♟c3! ♙f8 (not 11...♙g4?! 12 ♟e4 ♙e7 13 h3 ♖h5 14 c3 d3 15 ♖e3 with a strong initiative – Pálkóvi) and now:

a) 12 ♟xd4 ♖xh6 (not 12...♟xd4? 13 ♗xd4! ♗xd4 14 ♖e8 ♗d6 15 ♟d5! and wins) 13 ♟xc6 ♗xd1 14 ♟e7+ ♟g7 15 ♖axd1 ♙e6 is equal.

b) 12 ♖xf8 ♟xf8 13 ♟e4 ♙f5 14 ♗d2 h5 15 ♗f4 and White has a strong attack according to Pálkóvi. Better is 13...f5, though White has lasting counterplay on the weak dark squares.

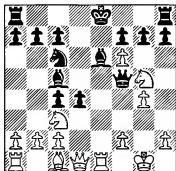
9 ♟g5 ♗d5

9...♙f8? is bad due to 10 ♗g4! gxf6 11 ♟xf7! ♟xf7 12 ♗xc6+ ♟g7 13 ♗g4+ ♟f7 14 ♗h5+ ♟g8 15 ♟d2 with a fantastic attack (e.g. 15...♙b4 16 ♖c4!) and has invested no material for it! Black was hoping for 10 ♗xc6+? fxe6 11 ♟xc6 ♗xf6! 12 ♟xc7+ ♟d7 13 ♟xa8 ♙d6 (better than 13...♖c6 14 ♖f4 ♙d6 15 ♖xd6 ♟xd6 and now 16 ♟a3!? looks interesting) 14 ♗g4+ ♖e6 15 ♗xg7+

♙c7 with a messy position, e.g. 16 ♙d2 ♚g8 17 ♜xh7 ♜g4 18 g3 ♝e5 19 ♙e1 ♚g7 20 ♜h6 ♚g6 21 ♜h8 ♝f3+ 22 ♜h1 ♝h4! and Black won in Aldrete Lobo-Oim, corr. 1998.

10 ♝c3 ♜f5 11 g4?!

This is too optimistic. 11 ♝c4 is better, as considered in Game 57.



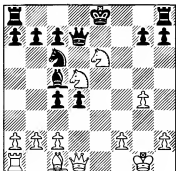
11...♜xf6?

Black falls for the trap. Instead 11...♜g6! was correct and after 12 ♝c4 (if 12 ♝d5? 0-0-0 13 ♝f4 ♜xf6, or 12 ♝xc6 fxe6 13 ♚xe6+ ♜d7 14 f4 ♜xc2! 15 ♜xc2 d3+ 16 ♜g2 dxc2 and Black is better) 12...♙b6 13 f4 0-0-0 14 f5 ♙xf5 15 gx f5 ♜xf5 Black had a very strong attack in Blackburne-Sämisch, Bled 1931.

12 ♝d5 ♜d8 13 ♚xe6+! fxe6 14 ♝xe6

What a mess! If 14...♜d6 15 ♙f4 and White wins.

14...♜d7

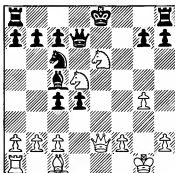


15 ♜e2!

It is not obvious that this is a bad move at all. Here Steinitz suggested 15 ♙h6 as winning, but that is not clear, as Black would respond 15...♙d6! and the position is a mess. But stronger is 15 ♝dxc7+! ♜f7 16 ♝g5+! (16 ♜f3+ ♜g8 17 ♜f5 ♝d8! 18 ♝xa8 ♜xe6 19 ♜xc5 ♜xg4+ 20 ♜f1 1/2-1/2 Korsano-Dobrey, Sharjah 1985) 16...♜g8 (not 16...♜g6? 17 ♜f3! and wins) and now:

a) 17 ♝xa8 ♙d6?! (but if 17...♙e7 18 ♜f3 ♝e5 19 ♜e4 ♜xg4+ 20 ♜xg4 ♝xg4 21 ♝c7 ♝xh2 22 ♜xh2 ♙d6+ 23 ♜g2 ♙xc7 24 ♝f3 and the endgame is winning for White, while after 17...h6 18 ♝e4 ♙f8 19 ♜e2 d3 20 cxd3 cxd3 21 ♜d1 and Black has no compensation) 18 ♜e2 ♝e5 19 ♙f4 d3 20 ♜e4 ♜xg4+ 21 ♜h1 and White won in Shue-Wood, Canberra 1996.

b) 17 ♜e2! may be even stronger; e.g. 17...d3 18 ♜e4 ♙xf2+ 19 ♜g2!! (19 ♜xf2 ♚f8+ 20 ♜e3! b5 21 cxd3 ♝e5 22 ♜d5+ ♜xd5 23 ♝xd5 ♝xg4+ 24 ♜d4 ♚f1 25 dxc4 ♚d1+ is less clear) 19...♚c8 20 ♜xc4+ ♜f8 21 ♙f4! and Black cannot defend himself satisfactorily. One line goes 21...♚xc7 22 ♜xf2! and Black has no good moves, as after 22...♚c8 23 ♙d6+ ♜e8 24 ♚e1+ ♜d8 25 ♝f7+ he is history.



15...♙e7?

The reason why Steinitz was unhappy with his play was presumably 15...♜f7!?, but White still wins after 16 ♝g5+ ♜g8 17 ♝xc7!

d3 18 ♖c4 ♗xf2+ 19 ♔g2 as illustrated in the previous note. But of course Black has more opportunities to create a mess here.

16 ♖dxc7+ ♗f7 17 ♖xc4

Black cannot hold the position now.

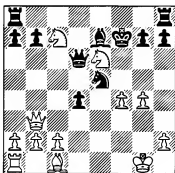
17...♖e5

17...♗g6 18 ♖d3+ ♗f7 19 ♖b3! ♗g6 20 ♖f4+ ♗f6 (20...♗h6 21 ♖h3+ is the idea behind the queen shuffling) 21 g5+ ♗f5 22 ♖h3+ and Black is mated in five moves, if White is not satisfied with winning the queen.

18 ♖b3 ♖d6

18...♗f6 is met by 19 ♗g5+ ♗g6 20 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 21 ♖f4+ ♗g5 22 h4+ ♗xg4 23 ♖h3+ ♗xf4 24 ♖d5+ and wins.

19 f4!



Steinitz has no reason to be unhappy with his choices in this game. He plays the attack excellently.

19...♖xg4 20 ♖g5+ ♗g6 21 ♖d3+ ♗h5 22 ♖h3+ ♗g6 23 ♖xg4 ♖b6

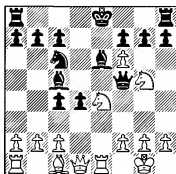
Now it is just mate. Black's best option was 23...♗xg5 24 ♖xg5+ ♗f7 25 ♖f5+ ♗e7 26 ♖xa8 and White wins.

24 ♖ge6+ ♗f6 25 ♖g5+ ♗f7 26 ♖xg7 mate

Game 57
Delaney-Hebden
Kilkenny 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 d4

exd4 5 0-0 ♗c5 6 e5 d5! 7 exf6 dxc4 8 ♖e1+ ♗e6 9 ♖g5 ♖d5 10 ♖c3 ♖f5 11 ♖ce4



11...0-0-0

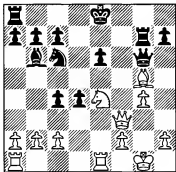
Black has two other possibilities:

a) 11...♗b6?! should be bad, being a slow move in a wild tactical position. It might be effective as a surprise weapon since the correct method of attack is not obvious, but objectively White is better.

a1) 12 ♖xf7? 0-0! and Black has a clear advantage.

a2) 12 ♖g3 ♖g6 (not 12...♖xf6? 13 ♖h5 and the black position collapses) 13 ♖xe6 fxe6 14 ♖xe6+ ♗d7 15 ♖h5 ♖he8 16 ♖f4 (or 16 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 17 ♖xg7 ♖f8 and Black does appear to be worse) 16...♖f7 17 ♖f3 and here *ECO* gives White as having a clear advantage, but it not at all clear that is the case. Strongest is probably 17...♖ad8! (if 17...♖xe6 18 ♖d5+ ♗c8 19 ♖xe6 d3 20 ♗e3 ♖xf6 21 cxd3 ♖xb2 22 ♖d1 ♖e2 23 dxc4 and White wins) 18 ♗d2 gxf6 19 ♖ae1 ♖xe6? (a weak move, exposing the king; instead 19...♖e5! 20 ♖d5+ ♗c8 21 ♖xe8 ♖xe8 would leave Black with the advantage) 20 ♖xe6 ♖e8 21 ♖g5 ♖xe1+ 22 ♗xe1 ♖c7 23 ♖f5+ ♗d8 24 ♗d2 ♖e2 25 ♖xf6+ ♖e7 26 h4 (Black has overpressed and is now worse. White wins the game in nice style) 26...d3 27 ♖f7+ ♗c8 28 ♖h8+ ♗d7 29 ♖d8+ ♗e6 30 ♖g5+ ♗f5 31 ♖f8+ 1-0 Chigorin-Charousek, 2nd match game, Budapest 1896.

a3) 12 fxf7 ♖g8 13 g4! (the critical variation; 13 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 14 ♖g5+ ♗xg7 15 ♖xc6+ ♗h8 is very good for Black as the white king is exposed here) 13...♗g6 14 ♖xc6 fxe6 15 ♖g5 ♖xg7 16 ♗f3 and Black has large problems with his defence.



This has been known since an article by G.Abels in *Deutsche Schachzeitung* Nr.11, 1900! Black now has the following tries:

a31) 16...♖f7 17 ♖f6+ ♖xf6 18 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 19 ♖xf6 ♗f7 20 g5 and White is clearly better according to Gligoric.

a32) 16...♗d7 17 ♖f6+ ♗c8 18 ♖xe6 ♗xg5 19 h4! ♗g6 20 h5 ♗g5 21 ♖ae1 ♖d8 22 ♖e5 and the white attack should win the game, e.g. 22...♗h4 23 ♖e8 c6 24 ♖f5+ ♗b8 (or 24...♗c7 25 ♖1e7+ ♖xe7 26 ♖xe7+ ♗b8 27 ♖d7+ ♗c7 28 ♖e5+ mates) 25 h6 ♖g5 26 ♗d7 and wins.

a33) 16...e5 17 ♖f6+ ♗e7 (or 17...♗f7 18 h4! h6 19 ♖e4+ ♗e6 20 h5 ♗f7 21 ♖f6 ♖gg8 22 ♗f5+ ♗d5 23 b3! and White won in Chigorin-Teichmann, London 1899) 18 h4 (after 18 ♖h4 ♖f7! 19 ♖hx7+ ♗d7 20 ♗d5+ ♗c8 21 ♖g5 ♖f8 the position could go either way; White is probably forced to enter an unclear endgame by 22 ♖e6+ ♗xe6 23 ♖xe6 ♖g8 24 h3) 18...h6 (if now 18...♖f7 19 ♖xe5!+ ♖xe5 20 ♖e1 ♗f8 21 ♖xe5 wins according to Chigorin; e.g. 21...♗g7 22 ♖f5 ♗h8 23 h5 ♗g7 24 ♖d1! ♗g8 25 ♗d5) 19 ♖g8+ ♗e6 20 ♖hx6 and White is clearly better. While Black can get his king into

safety, his bishop is out of the game and he will lose the c4-pawn too.

b) 11...♖f8! should also be a small mistake in my opinion. Perhaps I am wrong, because this is an idea from Akiba Rubinstein – and as Paul Keres taught us, Rubinstein's ideas are immortal! But let us get serious! The bishop retreats from a good post in the centre back to the starting position – and this in an open game! White now continues 12 ♖xf7! ♗xf7 13 ♖g5+ ♗g8 14 g4 ♗g6 (not 14...♗xg4+?? 15 ♗xg4 ♖xg4 16 f7 mate) and now:

b1) 15 fxf7?! ♖d5! 16 gxh8♗+ ♗xh8 17 f4 (or 17 ♖h3 ♖d6 and Black has counterplay according to Rubinstein) 17...♖c5 18 f5 d3+ 19 ♗f1 ♖f8 20 ♖f4 and ECO claims a clear advantage for White, but 20...h6! gives Black a strong attack, e.g. 21 fxf6 ♖xf6+ 22 ♖f3 ♖xf3+ 23 ♗g2 ♖f2+! 24 ♗h3 ♖d6 25 ♖e8+ ♗g7 26 ♗g1 ♖f3+ 27 ♗h4 ♖e7! 28 ♗d4+ ♗xg6 when White would require a good deal of luck to survive.

b2) 15 ♖xe6 gxf6 16 ♗f3 ♗g7 17 ♖e4 (17 ♖f4 was played in Surowiak-Jaworsky, corr. 1994, when Black has many moves, the most solid being 17...♖e8 18 ♖xe8 ♗xe8 19 ♖e4 ♗g6 and Black will quickly play ...♖g8 and ...♗h8 with a good game) 17...♖e5 (17...♖e7! is as a possible improvement, e.g. 18 ♖g5 ♖af8 19 ♖e1 ♖f7 with chances for both sides in a messy position) 18 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 19 ♖xf6 ♖d6 with an unclear game according to Keres.

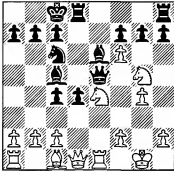
12 g4

12 fxf7! achieves nothing. 12...♖hg8 13 g4 (or 13 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 14 ♖xe6 fxe6 15 ♖xe6 ♗d5 16 ♖xd8 ♖xg7 and Black is better) 13...♗xg4! 14 ♗xg4 ♖xg4 15 ♖xc5 ♖xg7. for example 16 ♗f1 d3 (or 16...h6!?) 17 f3 ♖f5 18 cxd3 cxd3 19 ♖d2 h6 20 ♖ge4 ♖h3+ 21 ♗f2 ♖g2+ 22 ♗e3 ♖d4 and Black wins.

12...♗e5

The only move. 12...♗d5? 13 fxf7 ♖hg8 14 ♖f6 ♗d6 15 ♖ge4! trapped the queen in

Chigorin-Albin, Berlin 1897, while if 12... ♖xg4! 13 ♖xg4 ♙xg4 14 ♜xf7 gxf6 15 ♜xd8 ♜e5 16 ♙f4! ♜f3+ 17 ♖g2 ♜xe1+ 18 ♙xe1 ♙b4 19 c3 with a clear advantage to White.



13 ♜xe6

Here White could also think of:

a) 13 f4? d3+ 14 ♖f1 (14 ♖g2 ♖d5 15 fxg7 ♙hg8 with a strong attack in Rossolimo-Medina, Malaga 1968; here *ECO* suggests 16 cxd3 cxd3 17 ♙d2 as unclear, but after 17... ♙xg7 Black should win without any problems; something like 18 ♙c3 ♙d4 gets White nowhere) 14... ♖d4! (14... ♖d5) 15 ♙c3 ♖xe3 16 ♙xe3 ♙xe3 17 fxg7 ♙hg8 and Black has a strong attacking position; e.g. 18 ♜xe6 fxe6 19 cxd3 ♙xg7 20 ♖e1 ♙xf4 and Black stands better.

b) 13 ♜f3? ♖d5 14 fxg7 ♙hg8! (or 14... ♙xg4! 15 gxh8 ♙xh8 16 ♜f6 ♖xf3 17 ♜xg4 ♖xd1 18 ♙xd1 ♙g8 19 h3 h5 with a clear advantage to Black in Zuev-Hamatgaleev, Russia 1999) 15 ♜f6 ♖d6 16 ♙h6 ♙d5 17 ♜xg8 ♙xg8 and White is in trouble; e.g. 18 g5 ♖f4, or 18 ♖e2 ♖xh6! 19 ♖c8+ ♙xc8 20 ♙xc8+ ♜d7 21 g8 ♖h3! and Black wins, or if 18 ♙c1 ♙xg7 19 ♜g5 ♜e5 20 ♙f4 ♙xg5! 21 ♙xg5 ♙c6! followed by ... ♖d5 and mate comes soon.

c) 13 fxg7 ♙hg8 14 ♜xe6 transposes to the next note, and 14 f4 d3+ 15 ♖f1 ♖d4 is the same as 13 f4 above, while if 14 ♜xc5 ♖xc5 15 ♜e4 ♖e5 16 ♙h6 d3 and Black is

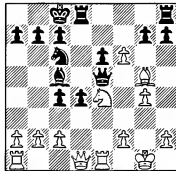
much better.

13... fxe6 14 ♙g5

White does not have a bright future after 14 fxg7? ♙hg8 15 ♙h6 d3! (Black needs to get his pieces working) 16 c3 and then:

a) 16... d2 17 ♙c2 ♙d3 is highly unclear; e.g. 18 ♜xc5 (if 18 ♖f1 ♖d5 19 ♙d1 ♙c7 20 ♖g2 ♜e5 21 ♙xd2 ♜f7 22 g5 ♙xd2 23 ♙xd2 ♖f5, with the idea of ... ♖g6 followed by ... ♜xb6, might be slightly better for Black) 18... ♖xc5 19 ♙xd2 ♜e5 20 ♙xd3 cxd3 21 ♖g2 ♖d5+ 22 ♖g3 ♜f7 23 ♖d2 with unclear play in Radulov-V.Sokolov, Yugoslavia 1961.

b) 16... ♙e7 seems stronger and if 17 f4 ♖d5 18 ♖d2 (as in Friedmann-Marthinsen, corr. 1984) then 18... ♙h4 19 ♙c3 ♜e7!, intending ... ♖c6 and ... ♜d5, and Black is better.



14... ♙b6!

I prefer this move and not only because it is cool! Black has also tried:

a) 14... ♙d7? is weak because of 15 fxg7 ♙g8 16 ♙f6 ♖d5 17 ♜xc5 ♖xc5 18 ♙xe6 and White was better in Faas-Pukshansky, Leningrad 1975.

b) 14... h6? is a nice idea. Saether-Vajs, corr. 1978, saw 15 fxg7 hxg5 16 gxh8 ♙xh8 17 ♜g3, when Black should probably have continued 17... ♖d5! with ideas like 18 ♖c2 d3 19 ♖xc6+ (if 19 cxd3 ♜d4 and it is all over bossa nova) 19... ♙xe6 20 ♙xc6 ♜d4 21 ♙f6 dxc2 22 ♖g2 ♙b4 23 ♙c1 ♙d2 24

♠e2 ♖xc1 25 ♠xc1 ♖e8 and wins. But White can improve on this by inserting 15 ♠xc5! ♜xc5 and then 16 fxg7 hxg5 17 gxh8 ♜xh8 18 ♖xe6 with a clear advantage in Cafferty-Sombor, Bognor Regis 1965.

c) 14...g6 15 f7 ♖e7 16 f4 ♜g7 17 ♖xe7 ♠xc7 18 ♠g5 d3 19 ♠xc6 ♜xf7 20 ♠xd8 ♖xd8 and Black has good compensation for the exchange in Shkurovich Khazin-Krantz, corr 1981.

d) 14...♖dg8 15 f4? d3+ 16 ♠h1 ♜d5 17 cxd3 cxd3 18 fxg7 ♜xg7 19 ♖f6 was played in Blauert-Caldouras, Germany 1989, and now after 19...♖f8! 20 ♖xg7 ♜xf4 21 ♜b3 ♖xe4 22 ♜xd5 cxd5 Black is much better according to Pálkövi. Instead 15 ♠xc5!? gives an unclear game. One line possible line is 15...♜xg5 16 f7 ♜xc5 17 fxg8 ♜+ ♖xg8 18 ♖xe6 ♖d8 and Black has sufficient counterplay, but hardly anything more.

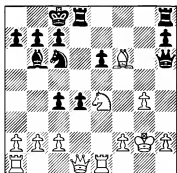
15 fxg7 ♜xg7 16 ♖f6

Not 16 ♖xd8? ♖xd8 17 ♠g3 d3 and White can take his exchange with him to the grave.

16...♜h6

Pálkövi suggests 16...♜g6!? and if 17 ♖xh8? ♖xh8 18 ♠g3 ♖f8 with a strong initiative. 16...♜f7!? is also possible.

17 ♠g2!?



Smart play. White understands that without the bishop (i.e. after 17 ♖xh8 ♖xh8) his dark squares are very weak. Perhaps this po-

sition is playable for White, but my advice is ... play it as Black!

17...♠b4

An alternative was 17...♖a5!? 18 ♖f1 ♜f4! with unclear play.

18 g5 ♜h4 19 ♠g3 ♜f4 20 ♖e4 ♜d6 21 ♖xh8

Or 21 ♖e5 ♜c6 22 ♜d2 ♠d5 23 ♖xh8 ♖xh8 24 ♠g1 ♖f8 25 ♖f1 with some chances for a save.

21...♖xh8 22 a3!?

Preferable was 22 ♜g4 ♠xc2 23 ♖xe6 ♜d5+ 24 ♠g1 ♠b8 25 ♖d1 and though Black is slightly better White can still fight.

22...♠d5 23 ♜g4 ♖f8 24 ♖f1 ♠f4+ 25 ♠h1 d3 26 cxd3 cxd3 27 ♠h5 ♠xh5 28 ♜xh5 ♜d5?!

It turns out that the queen is misplaced on d5. Instead 28...d2! would give Black a clear advantage; after something like 29 ♖d1 ♜c6 30 ♜g4 ♖xf2 31 ♜xe6+ ♜xe6 32 ♖xe6 ♠d7 33 ♖f6 ♖e2 and Black should win the endgame without any troubles. The d-pawn is fabulous.

29 ♜g4??

Necessary was 29 f3 and then, as Black has nothing after 29...♜xe4 30 fxe4 ♖xf1+ 31 ♠g2 ♖g1+ 32 ♠h3 ♠d8 33 ♜f3, it might be best to give the king some air before beginning the fight with 29...a6!? 30 ♖d1 ♠b8 31 ♜g4 ♜b3 with good play for Black, though White is still very much present in the game.

29...♖f5

Now Black is winning, though 29...♖xf2! was even stronger.

30 f3 d2 31 ♖d1 ♖g5 32 ♜f4 c6??

Here the game has obviously entered into the time trouble phase. 32...♖g1+! 33 ♖xg1 ♖xg1 wins very easily.

33 ♜f8+ ♖d8 34 ♜f7 ♖g6 35 ♖f4??

After 35 ♜f4 it is at all not easy for Black to make progress.

35...♜d3!

Now it is all over again.

36 ♖b4 b6 37 ♖g4 ♖f6 0-1

Summary

5 0-0 is a poor opening choice for White. It's tempting for me to say that it is even inaccurate. Why? Well, after a few easy moves (5...♖xe4 6 ♖e1 d5 7 ♗xd5 ♜xd5 8 ♘c3 ♞h5) Black gets an excellent position without any problems. So the love this line receives from club players all around the world is completely unjustified. 8...♞a5 is by the way also fine for Black; it is less ambitious, but more solid and more popular.

The Max Lange Attack is an interesting alternative to 5...♖xe4. The difference is that while 5...♖xe4 gives an easy game with simple and clear positions, 5...♗c5 creates a messy struggle, albeit one in which Black is no worse equipped to participate. The theoreticians – and the vast majority of grandmasters – prefer 5...♖xe4 because it leads to simple equality, which they quite rightly regard as a success for Black. But really it is just a matter of taste.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 d4 exd4 5 0-0 (D) ♖xe4

5...♗c5 6 e5

6...♗g4 – *Game 55*

6...d5

7 ♗b5 ♘e4 8 ♘xd4 – *Game 43 (Chapter 7)*

7 exf6 dxc4 8 ♖e1+ ♗e6 9 ♗g5 ♜d5 10 ♘c3 ♞f5 (D)

11 g4 – *Game 56*

11 ♘cc4 – *Game 57*

6 ♖e1 d5

6...f5 – *Game 48*

7 ♗xd5 ♜xd5 8 ♘c3 ♞a5

8...♞h5 9 ♖xe4 ♗e6 10 ♗g5

10...♗d6 – *Game 49*; 10...♗b4 – *Game 50*

9 ♖xe4 ♗e6 (D)

10 ♗d2

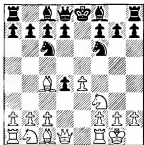
10 ♗eg5 0-0-0 11 ♖xe6 fxe6 12 ♞xe6

12...h6 – *Game 51*; 12...♗d6 – *Game 52*

10...♞h5

10...♞a4 – *Game 53*; 10...♞f5 – *Game 54*

11 ♗g5 – 8...♞h5



5 0-0



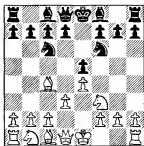
10... ♞f5



9... ♗e6

CHAPTER NINE

4 d3



1 e4 e5 2 d3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 d3

The move 4 d3 is less sharp than the other lines analysed in this book, but is no less important from a practical point of view, as 4 d3 is quite popular as well. Just see how Maciejko wins against Ivanchuk in Game 65 below. So although 4 d3 does seem a bit less aggressive than the alternatives, it should not be rejected as completely harmless.

From our starting position for this chapter, Black has four options: 4...h6 (Game 58), the very rare 4...d5 (Game 59), and 4...c7 (Games 60-66) which is the main line for this variation. The obvious fourth choice, 4...c5, transposes to the Italian Game (3 c4 c5) and is therefore not covered in this book.

Game 58

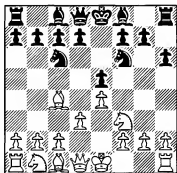
Kogan-Svidler

Oakham 1992

1 e4 e5 2 d3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 d3 h6!

The idea behind this move is simple. Black prevents d3-g5 and intends to develop with ...g7-g6 and ...c7-g7. Generally in the Open Games Black cannot afford to waste time on such prophylactic measures. White would open the centre with d2-d4 and

use his lead in development to launch a devastating attack. But here it is acceptable because White has already played the slower d2-d3, so that if (or rather when) he advances d3-d4, Black will have had his little move for free.



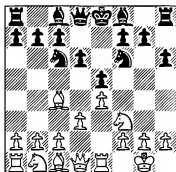
5 0-0 d6

Black reinforces his centre before playing ...g7-g6. This move order also gives him some additional possibilities.

6 c1e1

If 6 c3 g6 7 d4 c7 8 c1e1 c7g7 9 d3b2 0-0 10 h3 d7 11 d1f1 g5 12 d1h2 dxf3 13 dxf3 c7h7 14 a4 f5 and in Ghinda-Beliavsky, Lvov 1981, both players had their chances. Black can also try 6...g5! which is not so stupid as it looks. Gelfand-Bareev.

Munich 1993, continued 7 $\text{Qb}d2$ $\text{g}7$ 8 $\text{b}3$ 0-0? 9 $\text{c}4$ $\text{e}6$ 10 $\text{e}1$ and White is slightly better. (Most importantly, it is very hard for Black to neutralise this advantage, as it is based on a clear weakness in his own camp). Alekhine played similar ideas to the one played here by Black (in the Philidor), and he used to delay castling for as long as possible, in order to remain flexible. Therefore I recommend 8... $\text{e}7!$ with the idea of ... $\text{g}6$ - $\text{f}4$ and a kingside attack. Maybe Black will castle queenside later. There is at least no reason to omit the possibility. So I find that this move is really worth trying. The position is unclear.



6...g6

Here 6... $\text{a}5!$ is a good road to heaven (for which read 'equality'). It is important to remember that if you can exchange White's light-squared bishop without compromising your own position it is nearly always good to do so. For that reason, as soon as Black plays ... $\text{d}7$ - $\text{d}6$, White will create a safe home for the bishop, either by $\text{c}2$ - $\text{c}3$ (allowing the bishop to retreat to $\text{c}2$, via $\text{b}5$ and $\text{a}4$), or by advancing his a-pawn (as for example in Games 64-66).

Here White has the following options:

a) 7 $\text{b}5+$ $\text{c}6$ 8 $\text{a}4$ $\text{b}5$ 9 $\text{b}3$ $\text{c}5$ 10 $\text{d}2$ $\text{e}7$ 11 $\text{xa}5!$? $\text{xa}5$ 12 $\text{a}4$ $\text{b}4$ 13 $\text{Qbd}2$ 0-0 14 $\text{c}4$ $\text{d}8$ 15 $\text{e}3$ $\text{h}7$ and the position is equal according to Arkhipov.

b) 7 $\text{c}3$ $\text{g}6$ 8 $\text{a}4$ $\text{xc}4$ 9 $\text{dxc}4$ $\text{e}6$ 10

$\text{d}3$ $\text{d}7$ 11 $\text{e}3$ $\text{g}7$ and the position is unclear.

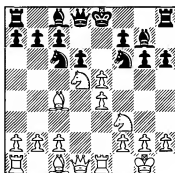
c) 7 $\text{d}5$ $\text{c}6!$ 8 $\text{xf}7+$ $\text{xf}7$ 9 $\text{b}4$ $\text{g}5!$ (a new idea; after 9... $\text{c}5$ 10 $\text{bxa}5$ $\text{xa}5$ 11 $\text{c}3$ $\text{e}7$ 12 $\text{d}4$ White is slightly better) 10 $\text{b}2$ (if 10 $\text{d}2!$ $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{h}4$ $\text{xe}4!$ 12 $\text{dxe}4$ $\text{xb}4$ and Black is better) 10... $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{fd}2$ $\text{e}6$ and only White will find problems here.

7 d4 ♖e7

This is a standard move in this system. Black reinforces the $\text{e}5$ -square. Note that if White delays $\text{d}3$ - $\text{d}4$ for too long Black will have time for ... $\text{g}7$ and ...0-0, and then be able to play the preferable ... $\text{we}8$, making $\text{c}3$ - $\text{d}5$ is less disturbing and ... $\text{c}6$ - $\text{e}7$ a possibility.

7... $\text{g}4!$ has also been tried, but it cannot really be recommended. After 8 $\text{b}5$ $\text{xf}7$ 9 $\text{xc}6$ $\text{bxc}6$ 10 $\text{Qbd}2$ $\text{g}7$ (if 10... $\text{exd}4$ 11 $\text{h}3$ $\text{xf}3$ 12 $\text{Qxf}3$ $\text{c}5$ White exploits his lead in development by opening the position: 13 $\text{e}5!$ $\text{dxe}5$ 14 $\text{Qxe}5$ $\text{Qxe}5$ 15 $\text{Kxe}5+$ $\text{e}7$ 16 $\text{Wf}3$ $\text{f}8$ 17 $\text{f}4$ with more than a pawn's worth of play) 11 $\text{h}3$ $\text{xf}3$ 12 $\text{Qxf}3$ $\text{exd}4$ 13 $\text{Qxd}4$ $\text{e}5$ 14 $\text{f}4$ $\text{c}5$ was Makarichev-Nenashev, Russia 1993; and now 15 $\text{Qf}3$ gives White a slight edge according to Makarichev.

8 $\text{c}3$ $\text{g}7$ 9 $\text{d}5$ $\text{d}8$ 10 $\text{dxe}6$

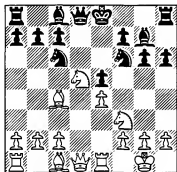


10...dxe5

In my opinion 10... $\text{e}5!$ is better and leads to equality. After 11 $\text{Qxe}5$ $\text{dxe}5$ White has two theoretical continuations to choose from:

a) 12 ♖f3 ♜xd5 13 ♙xd5 0-0 14 a4 c6 15 ♙c4 ♜c7 16 b3 ♞e8 17 ♙a3 ♙e6 18 ♙xe6 ♞xe6 and Black slowly solved his opening problems in Sermek-Malaniuk, Pula 1999. After 19 ♞ad1 he has 19...b5!? with counterplay.

b) 12 ♙d2 a5! (it is important to take control of the b4-square; less accurate is 12...♜xd5 13 ♙xd5 0-0 14 ♙b4 ♞e8 15 ♞c3 c6 16 ♙b3 and White stands slightly better according to Svidler) 13 ♙c3 (13 ♜e2!? with an even game is of course also possible, as are other relaxed moves) 13...c6 14 ♜e3 ♜xd1 15 ♜xd1 b5 and Black is OK... at least!



11 b4!

White begins a queenside initiative. Now the disadvantage of keeping the knights on the board becomes apparent. The knight on f3 is attacking e5, the knight on c6 is defending, but the white knight is not about to be displaced.

Instead, 11 ♙c3 is too routine: after 11...♜e4! 12 ♙xh6 ♞xh6 13 ♞xe4 ♙f5 14 ♞e1 ♜d7 15 ♜e3 0-0-0 Black is at least no worse. White needs to escape into the endgame as soon as possible, when he might be able to maintain equilibrium.

11...0-0 12 ♙b2

Not yet 12 b5 ♜a5 13 ♜xf6+ ♜xf6 14 ♙d3 a6 15 bxa6 bxa6 16 ♜d2 ♜c6 17 ♜c3 and the position is about equal.

12...♙g4

12...♜xd5?! 13 exd5 ♜xb4 14 ♙xe5 ♙xe5 15 ♜xe5 is good for White. His pieces are better placed and he has a strong presence in the centre.

13 h3 ♙xf3 14 ♜xf3 ♜xd5 15 exd5

There is no compensation for the pawn after 15 ♙xd5 ♜xb4, as 16 ♙xb7?! ♞b8 17 ♞ed1 ♜f6 18 ♜xf6 ♙xf6 19 c3 ♜c2!? 20 ♞ac1 ♜e3 21 fxe3 ♞xb7 gives Black a better endgame.

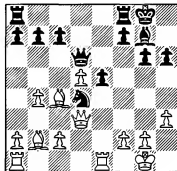
15...♜d4

Not 15...♜xb4?! 16 ♜b3! and Black loses at least a pawn.

16 ♜d3

16 ♙xd4 exd4 leads to equality.

16...♜d6



17 f4?

This advance is completely out of touch with the position. Artur Kogan is an inventive and highly original grandmaster, but when this game was played he was still a junior (albeit a very strong junior) and often took unrealistic risks. Better was here 17 a3! ♞ad8 18 ♙a2 and White has a slight advantage.

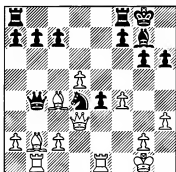
17...♜xb4 18 ♞ab1?

White continued with his plan of active play, probably not fully aware of the strength of Black's response. Preferable was 18 ♙a3 ♜b6 19 ♜h1 e4 20 ♞xe4 ♞fe8 and Black is slightly better. It is somewhat similar to the game, but it is a superior version for White without the exchange of the bishops, as

White still has some counterplay on the dark squares. Or else White could put on the breaks with 18 ♙xd4 exd4 19 f5 , though even here the opposite-coloured bishops cannot guarantee a draw. Black is still better, not because of the extra pawn, but because the white king is vulnerable on the dark squares. This becomes transparent with the weak continuation 19 ♙ab1 ♚d6 20 ♙xb7 ♜xf4 and mating patterns with $\dots\text{♙e5}$ will soon appear.

18...e4!

Black returns the pawn correctly. Instead of being tied down by pins and overloaded pieces, he exchanges the dark-squared bishops and gets a position where his knight is fabulous on f5/d6 , while White's bishop on c4 is terribly limited by his own pawns.



19 ♙xe4 ♜f5 20 ♙b3 ♜c5+ 21 ♚h2 ♙xb2 22 ♙xb2 ♙ae8 23 ♙a4?

It is often difficult to play bad positions simply because whatever move you investigate, the inevitable outcome will be that you are worse. Here White commits the common mistake of not choosing the lesser evil, even though that can sometimes be very hard to determine. Better here was 23 c4 ♙xc4 24 ♜xe4 ♜d6 25 ♜d3 ♙e8 and Black has good chances of winning the ending thanks to his more active pieces and superior structure.

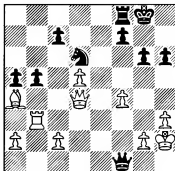
23...♙xe4 24 ♙xe4 ♜d6 25 ♜d3 ♙f2!

White cannot save the position anymore.

26 ♙b4

If 26 ♜g3 ♜d4 and White loses material. **26...a5 27 ♜d4**

Or 27 ♙d4 b5 and Black wins the bishop. **27...♙f1 28 ♙b3 b5!**



The key move and the bishop is simply trapped. What a glorious end to Black's strategy of strong knight against weak bishop.

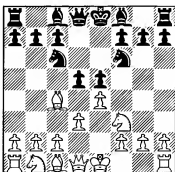
29 ♙f3 ♜e2 30 ♙b3 a4 31 ♙xa4 bxa4 32 ♜xa4 ♜f5 33 ♜a3 ♜xc2 34 ♜c3 ♜xa2 35 ♜xc7 ♜xd5 0-1

Game 59

Tagansky-Glazkov

Moscow 1975

1 e4 e5 2 ♜f3 ♜c6 3 ♙c4 ♜f6 4 d3 d5!?

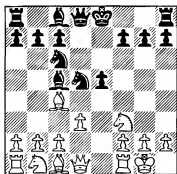


Virtually all authors believe this move to be a mistake. The truth is as often otherwise. It is clear to me that if Black can play such a

passive move as 4...h6 without being punished, he should also be able to play 4...d5. 'Safe sex' is what my coach, master Wojciech Ehrenfeucht, called 4 d3. White usually plays this move in search for a quiet game. 4...d5 declines this suggestion is therefore interesting for that reason alone. Besides which, 4...d5 is not very well known and with new analysis it also very dangerous. I have played it myself in internet games with short time controls and to the present date I have won every game!

5 exd5 ♖xd5 6 0-0

White can also choose to attack the e-pawn at once, but this seems to be very risky. After 6 ♖e2 ♗e7! (not 6...♗g4?! 7 h3 ♗h5? 8 g4 ♗g6 9 ♖xe5 ♖d4 10 ♗b5+! c6 11 ♖xc6+! ♖xe2 12 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 13 ♖xe2 and wins) 7 ♖xe5 (otherwise White's last move did not make much sense) 7...♖d4! 8 ♗d1 (the only serious move; not 8 ♗e4?? ♖f6 9 ♗xf7+ ♗f8 10 ♗h4 ♖g4 11 ♖g6+ ♗xf7 and White is dead meat, while 8 ♗h5? is simply a waste of time: Black plays 8...♗e6! and the white queen will have to go to d1 all the same, as after 9 ♗b3 ♖f6 10 ♗d1 ♖xb3 11 axb3 ♗d5 Black has a strong development and the two bishops for his pawn) 8...♗f6 9 ♖f3 ♗g4 and Black has full compensation. 6...♗c5



This is the critical position for 4...d5?.

7 ♖e1

After this move Black looks OK, or at

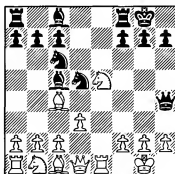
least the position is very complicated. White has a whole range of alternatives that should be considered:

a) 7 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 8 ♖e1 ♗e6 9 ♖xe5 ♗xf2+! 10 ♗h1 (not 10 ♗xf2? ♗f6+) 10...c6 11 ♗f3 ♗d4 12 ♖c4 ♗f6 and the position is about equal.

b) 7 ♖e2 0-0 8 ♖xe5 ♖d4 9 ♗h5 ♗e6 is unclear. Black has a lot of play for the pawn. But he should not fall into temptation and play 9...♖xc2?? because of 10 ♖xf7! ♖xf7 11 ♗xd5 ♗d7 12 ♗xf7+ ♗xf7 13 ♗xc5 and White should win.

c) 7 ♗b5! is in my opinion the most annoying move for Black here. The dual threat of giving a Black doubled pawns or simply taking the e-pawn cannot be easily dismissed. After 7...♗g4 (probably the only move) 8 ♖bd2 0-0 9 ♗xc6 bxc6 10 h3 ♗xf3 11 ♗xf3 f5 12 ♖b3 and White was better in Deszczynski-Pinski, Warsaw 1997. In this line I want to improve with 11...♖b4 12 ♗d1 f5 13 ♖b3 ♗d6 and though White still looks better, Black's position is playable. This needs practical testing. But for white players 7 ♗b5 is certainly still my recommendation.

7...0-0 8 ♖xe5 ♗h4



9 ♖f1?

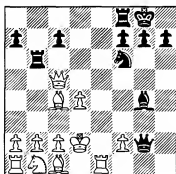
This is already a decisive mistake and clearly illustrates the dangers of this line. If instead 9 ♗xd5 ♗xf2+ 10 ♗h1 ♗xe1 (10...♖xe5 11 ♖xe5 ♗g4 is also strong) 11 ♖f3 ♗h5 12 ♗xc6 ♗g3! 13 ♗e4 ♗xh2 and

Black is clearly better.

The only move was 9 ♖f3 when Black now continues 9...♟f6 10 ♟xc6 (10 g3? is bad because of 10...♟xe5 11 ♜xe5 ♜d4 12 ♜c1 ♟g4 13 ♜f4 ♜ae8 14 ♜xe8 ♜xe8 15 ♜xd4 ♜c1+ 16 ♟g2 ♟xd4 17 ♟c3 ♟d7! and Black is much better) 10...♟g4! (not 10...bxc6 11 ♟f4 and Black is without compensation; time is very important in such a razor sharp line) 11 d4 ♜xh2+ 12 ♟f1 ♟d6 13 ♟e7+ ♟xe7 14 ♜xe7 ♜h1+ 15 ♟e2 ♟f6 and now:

a) 16 ♜e3? ♟g4+ 17 ♟d2 b5! 18 ♟b3 (not 18 ♟xb5? ♜d1+ 19 ♟c3 ♟d5+ and wins) 18...c5 19 c3 ♜ac8 was played in Konicek-Rybak, corr. 1999, and Black's attack is probably decisive. The only move now is 20 ♟xf7+ ♟xf7 21 ♜xe8+ ♟xe8 22 ♜xe8+ ♜f8 23 ♜e1 ♜xg2 24 ♟c2 ♟xf2+ 25 ♟d2 ♟f5+ 26 ♟b3 ♜e2 and the white king is in trouble; after something like 27 ♜h4 ♜d5+ 28 ♟a3 a5 the end seems very near.

b) 16 ♟d2 (much better) 16...♟g4 17 ♜e1 (if 17 ♜f4? ♜d1+ 18 ♟c3 b5 19 ♟b3 a5 with a terrible attack in Nolan-Harding, corr. 1989) 17...♜h2! (if 17...♜e1+! 18 ♟xe1 ♟xf3 19 gxf3 and White has two bishops for the rook) 18 ♜xb7 ♜ab8 19 ♜c6 ♜b6 20 ♜c5 ♜xg2



My computer is close to fainting when it sees this position. White is apparently completely winning. However, I am sure that my idol Mikhail Tal would bet a bottle of vodka on Black here!

9...♟xe5

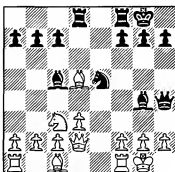
Black is already winning!

10 ♟xd5 ♟g4?

This smooth developing move seems natural, but is actually a blunder. Black can attack with only three pieces as White has no representation on the kingside light squares. Thus 10...♟g4! and the game is finished, e.g. 11 ♟f4 (or 11 h3 ♟xf2 12 ♟xf2 ♜xf2+ 13 ♟h1 ♟g4! and kingdom come is near) 11...♟xf2+ (11...♟xf2 12 ♜f3 ♟g4 also wins instantly) 12 ♟h1 g5 and Black wins a piece because of 13 ♟xc7 ♟xh2! 14 ♟xh2 ♟g3 and mate is imminent.

11 ♜d2 ♜ad8 12 ♟c3?

Once again a natural developing move is a terrible mistake. This game should probably not be shown to beginners. Instead 12 ♟xb7 intending ♜g5 was necessary. Black of course has terrific compensation for the pawns, for example after the natural move 12...♜fe8, but White is still alive.



12...♜xd5! 13 ♟xd5 ♟f3+ 14 gxf3 ♟d6! 15 h3

White has no defence anymore.

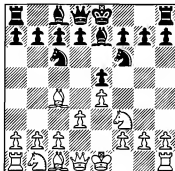
After 15 ♟f6+? (or 15 f4 ♟f3 and mates) 15...gxf6 16 ♜h6 ♟h5 17 h3 Black is clearly better after something like 17...♟h8, but strongest is simply 17...♜c8! where the impotence of the white pieces becomes apparent to all. Black will play 18...♜xh3 19 ♟f4 ♟xf4 20 ♜xf4 ♜e5 and win the queen.

15...♟h2+ 0-1

15...♙xf3 also won, but why not finish in style?

Game 60
Psakhis-Geller
Sochi 1984

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♗f6 4 d3 ♙e7



This quiet developing move is the most natural and also the most frequently played (ahead even of 4...♙c5).

5 0-0

Also possible of course is 5 ♗c3, but moves like this are dangerous only for White. The game after this move might very well be rather boring, e.g. 5...d6 6 h3 0-0 7 0-0 (too optimistic is 7 g4?! ♗a5 8 ♙e3 c6! with swift counterplay in the centre) 7...♗a5 8 ♙b3 ♗xb3 9 axb3 c6 10 ♗e2 ♗e8 11 g4 g6 12 ♗g3 ♗g7 and the position is about equal.

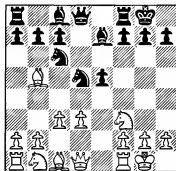
5...0-0 6 c3 d5!?

This advance is still somewhat risky, but also gives Black lively play. The safer 6...d6 is perfectly possible, and will often transpose to Game 63 below after 7 ♙b3.

7 exd5 ♗xd5 8 ♙b5

The best chance to fight for an advantage. Instead 8 ♙e1 is met with 8...♙g4 9 h3 ♙h5 10 ♗bd2 (too risky is 10 g4 ♙g6 11 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 12 ♙xe5 ♗b6 13 ♙b3 ♙f6 14 ♙e1 ♗xd3 15 ♗xd3 ♙xd3 when Black has superior development and structure) 10...♗b6 (or 10...♗f4 11 ♗f1 ♗a5 12 ♙xf4 exf4 13 ♙b5

and the game is unclear) 11 ♙b3 (11 ♙b5 ♙d6 12 ♗e4 ♙e8 13 ♙g5 f6 14 ♙h4 a6! 15 ♙xc6 bxc6 is also unclear) 11...♗h8 12 ♗e4 f5 13 ♗g3 ♙g6 14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♙xe5 f4 and Black had good compensation for the material in Radulov-Spassky, Slavija-Solingen 1984. White will find it difficult to finish his development, and those of his pieces already developed have problems finding good squares.



8...♙d6

8...f6! is probably better and if 9 h3 ♗d6! (a new idea) 10 ♗bd2 a6 and Black is OK. 9 ♙e1 is met strongly with 9...♙g4! 10 ♗bd2 a6 11 ♙xc6 bxc6 and the weakness of Black's pawn structure is compensated by counterplay against d3 and the slightly greater space. Kutschenko-Wedberg, Copenhagen 1991, continued 12 h3 ♙h5 13 ♗f1 c5 14 ♗g3 ♙f7 15 ♗e2 ♙e8 16 ♗f5 ♙f8 and Black had an excellent position.

Also possible is 8...♙g4 but White can then play 9 h3 ♙h5 (9...♙xf3 10 ♗xf3 White is slightly better) 10 g4 ♙g6 11 ♙xc6 bxc6 12 ♗xe5 when 'the question of Black's compensation is problematic', to phrase it in the words of a politician or his spin doctor. (I am a political scientist myself.) The translation would be something like this: Black is a pawn down, has problems with his ruined pawn structure, and no real counterplay.

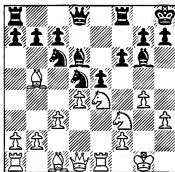
9 ♙e1

White should not go after the e-pawn with

9 xc6 bxc6 10 e1 , as Black would react with great pace and be fine: 10... g4 11 h3 h5 12 g4 (if 12 bd2 f5 with unclear play) 12... g6 13 xe5 wh4 14 g2 xe5 15 xe5 f5 and Black has full compensation for the pawn in the form of a terrific lead in development and a very weak white king.
9... g4 10 h3 h5 11 bd2 wh8 ?

This attempt at a pawn sacrifice does not work out, as White can also choose simply to develop his forces and thereby get a slight pull. Better were either 11... f6 12 d4 exd4 13 e4 e5 14 g4 exf3 + 15 whf3 if7 and Black keeps the balance, or 11... db6 !? transposing to a sub-line (11 b5) to 8 e1 in the notes above.

12 g4 g6 13 e4 f6 14 d4



White now stands slightly better. His pressure in the centre is a little uncomfortable for Black to meet, and now he even snatches the bishop pair.

14... exd4 15 xd6 !

White goes for the bishops. After 15 xc6 ?! bxc6 16 xd4 wd7 Black would have good attacking chances.

15... whd6 16 xd4 xd4 17 whd4 c5 18 wd1 ad8 19 ef1 !

The bishop is transferred to g2 where it will not only protect the white king, but also create strong pressure on the long diagonal, making it difficult for Black to operate freely.

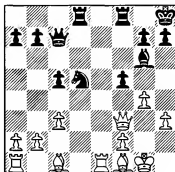
19... wc7

After 19... f5 20 g5 df6 21 whd6 xd6

22 e7 White has the initiative in the end-game.

20 wf3 f5 ?

This weakening of the g5 -square is now tactically flawed. The idea, of course, is to use the hook of white g4 -pawn in order to create open lines to the white king, but in real life it does not work out like that, as White is able to complete his development with gains of tempi. Preferable was 20... fe8 21 d2 wb6 22 ad1 ec2 23 c1 g6 and Black perhaps stands slightly worse, but nothing more.



21 g5 !

Black cannot take on g4 because the queen is en prise after 21... fxg4 22 exd8 !

21... ad7

Black is clearly worse. Also after 21... df6 22 gxf5 gh5 (the tactical 22... ad5 23 exf6 xf5 fails to 24 whf5 ! exf5 25 e7 wf4 26 exg7 + cg8 27 exf8 exf8 28 e3 and White should win the ending) 23 wg3 wd7 24 e6 and White stands much better.

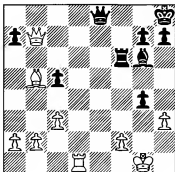
22 ad1 df6 !

This allows White to simplify to a position that requires only technical accuracy. Better was 22... db6 and Black is still alive. After 23 gxf5 df7 24 f6 gxf6 25 gh4 ! White is much better, but still there is hope of some complications. Note that 25 gh4 ? walks into the trap 25... gh5 ! and Black is OK.

23 exf6 exf6 24 exd7 whd7 25 ad1 we8

25... ad6 is met simply by 26 xd6 whd6

27 ♖xb7 and White has a winning endgame.
 26 ♖xb7 fxg4 27 ♖b5!



27... ♖g8

Black has few options now. If 27... ♖f8 28 ♖c7! ♖e6 29 hxg4 and White should win.

28 hxg4 h6 29 ♖xa7 ♖f4 30 ♖d7 ♖f8 31 ♖c7 ♖f7?!

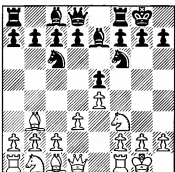
This loses by force. But 31... ♖xf2 32 ♖f5! ♖e2 33 ♖d8 ♖e8 34 ♖d6 was little improvement.

32 ♖c8+ 1-0

After 32... ♖h7 33 ♖e6 wins, while 32... ♖f8 is a lost ending.

Game 61
R. Perez-Gild. Garcia
Santa Clara 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♖c4 ♖f6 4 d3 ♖e7
 5 0-0 0-0 6 ♖b3



This move order is designed to meet 6...d5. By delaying c2-c3 White does not have a weakness on d3 to bother about after 6...d5, while on 6...d6 he will play 7 c3 after all to save the bishop from the black knight. Black can now choose to be active or passive.

6...d5

Against careful play Black plays aggressively! Of course Black can very well play the calm 6...d6 (see Game 63), but it does not guarantee equality.

7 exd5

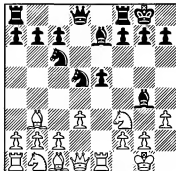
The only try for an advantage. If 7 ♖bd2 dxe4 8 dxe4 ♖c5 and the position is equal.

7... ♖xd5 8 ♖e1

The prophylactic 8 h3 is considered in Game 62.

8... ♖g4 9 h3

This move is more or less obligatory and gives Black an interesting choice between two perfectly sound options.



9... ♖h5!?

This move is for players who like complications, particularly if they are also fans of the Marshall Attack. 9... ♖xf3 is normally considered the main move here, and it is also perfectly fine. After 10 ♖xf3 ♖d4! (the key idea) 11 ♖e4 (not 11 ♖xd5? ♖xd5 12 ♖xd5 ♖xc2 13 ♖d2 ♖xa1 14 ♖c1 c6 15 ♖f3 ♖ad8 16 ♖c3 ♖xd3 and Black had a clear advantage in Dizdar-Mikhailchishin, Zenica 1989) 11... ♖xb3 12 axb3 ♖b4 13 ♖a3 ♖c6 and

there is no reason in the world why Black should be worse here.

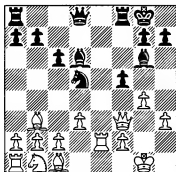
10 g4

Of course.

10...♗g6 11 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 12 ♜xe5 c6 13 ♜f3

13 ♗xd5 is best mer by 13...♗d6! 14 ♜e1 cxd5 with perfect compensation for the pawn.

13...♗d6 14 ♜e2 f5!



Black takes over the initiative with this move, which is actually an avalanche of pawn sacrifices. But these are too dangerous to accept. White needs to get his pieces into play.

15 g5

a) 15 ♗xd5+ is too dangerous. White immediately loses all control over the light squares: 15...cxd5 16 ♜xd5+ ♖h8 17 ♖c3 (not 17 ♜c6?? ♗h2+) 17...♜c8 18 ♜g2 ♗e8 19 ♖d5 ♜h4 and the position is unclear according to Nogueiras. Black seems to have enough compensation for the pawns.

a) 15 ♖c3! fxg4 16 ♜xg4 is very complicated. White is a pawn up but he is lacking in pawn cover for his king. Nevertheless, if he is to have the advantage in any line after 9...♗h5! it is probably here. Only practical tests or a month of isolation with a Pentium 5 PC could give a good hint about the true evaluation of this position.

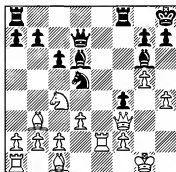
15...f4 16 h4 ♖h8 17 ♖d2?!

White begins a horrible knight manoeuvre

to exchange a bishop which has already lost its scope (after the pawn advanced to f4). Better was 17 ♖c3 but still the position is extremely dangerous for White: 17...♖xc3 (Nogueiras gives 17...♖c7 18 h5 ♗f5 19 ♖e4 ♖d5 and Black has the initiative) 18 bxc3 h6! (Black can also play more calmly with, for example, 18...♜d7) and now White should be very careful. If 19 gxh6? ♜xh4 20 hxg7+ ♖xg7 and in my opinion only a truly forgiving God would be able to save White. The black rooks will go to h8 and f5-g5.

17...♜d7 18 ♖c4?

18 ♖f1 is better, but White is still under a lot of pressure. One idea is simply 18...♗f5! (intending ...♗g4) 19 ♖h2 ♜ae8 and Black is for preference, though the game is not decided.



18...♗h5!!

A fantastic decoy sacrifice. White has no defence now.

19 ♜xh5 ♜h3 20 ♜e4

Everything loses here. If 20 ♖e5 f3 21 ♜g4 fxc2 and Black has won material, or 20 g6 h6 21 ♖e5 f3 etc., or 20 ♖xd6 f3 and White must part with the queen.

20...g6 0-1

Game 62

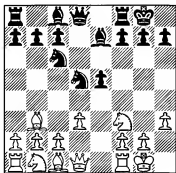
Dubiel-Macieja

Biala Podlaska 1994

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♗c4 ♖f6 4 d3 ♗e7

5 0-0 0-0 6 ♖b3 d5 7 exd5 ♗xd5 8 h3

White is so scared of 8...♗g4 that he decides to prevent it. But it is hard to imagine that Black should be worse after such a cautious move.



8...a5!

In my opinion this is the best move. The alternatives are:

a) 8...f5? 9 ♗c3 ♖e6 10 ♗xe5! ♗xe5 11 ♖e1 ♗d6 (or 11...♗f6 12 d4) 12 ♗b5 ♗d7 13 ♖xe5 and White has a clear advantage.

b) 8...♗f6 (with the idea of ...♗a5, but this does not really work out) 9 ♖e1 ♖e6 10 ♗bd2 ♗f4 11 ♗e4 (stronger than 11 ♖a4 ♗g6 12 ♖xc6 bxc6 13 ♗e4 ♖e7 and the position offers both players good chances according to Dolmatov) 11...♖xb3 12 axb3 and White has some advantage.

9 ♖a4?!

As we shall see there is a purely tactical reason why this move does not work. And having played 6 ♖b3 and 8 h3 it would be strange if White was able to refute a move like 8...a5.

Better here was 9 a3 a4 10 ♖a2 ♗h8 11 ♖e1 f6 12 d4 exd4 13 ♗xd4 ♗db4 14 axb4 ♗xd4 15 c3 ♗xd1 16 ♖xd1 ♖f5 17 ♗a3 ♗c5 18 ♗b5 c5 19 bxc5 ♖xc5 20 ♗d4 ♖fd8 and the game was equal in Kramnik-Kasparov, New York 1995.

9...♗d4! 10 ♗xe5

After 10 c3 ♗xf3+ 11 ♗xf3 ♖a6! Black rapidly develops the initiative; e.g. 12 ♖b3

♗f4 13 ♖xf4 ♖f6 14 ♗e2 ♖xf4 when Black had two bishops, an active rook and therefore clearly the brighter future in Berezjuk-Ulak, Frydek Mistek 1996.

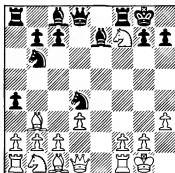
10...♗b6 11 ♖b3

11 c3 is again met with swift action: 11...♗xa4 12 ♗xa4 ♗e2+ 13 ♗h1 ♖f6 14 d4 ♖xh3! 15 gxf3 ♗d5+ 16 ♗h2 ♖xe5+ 17 dxe5 ♗xc1 18 ♖xc1 ♗xe5+ 19 ♗h1! (not 19 f4?? ♗e2+ 20 ♗h1 ♗f3+ 21 ♗h2 ♖ae8 and Black wins) 19...♗d5+ 20 ♗h2 with a direct draw. Black can also try 17...♗xe5+? as in Shirov-Mozetic, Tilburg 1993, when after 18 f4 (best) 18...♗h5 19 ♖d2 ♗g6 20 ♖e1 ♖ad8 21 ♗b5 ♖d3 Black has sufficient compensation according to Mozetic. He also notes 14 ♗e4 ♗xc1 15 ♖xc1 ♖xe5 16 ♗xe5 ♗xd3 17 ♗xc7 ♖xh3 18 ♗g3 ♗xg3 19 fxg3 without assessment. Does he think the position is equal or does he just want that readers of *Chess Informant* to think so? The truth is that Black stands much better! He has rook and bishop vs. rook and knight, and a superior structure.

11...a4!

These are necessary tactics. After 11...♗xb3 12 axb3 ♗d5 13 ♖e1 ♖d6 14 ♗a3 ♗f6 15 ♗ac4 b5 16 ♗xd6 cxd6 17 ♗f3 ♖b7 18 ♗g5 Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

12 ♗xf7



12...axb3!!

The big idea behind it all. Black gets three

minor pieces for the queen.

13 ♖xd8 bxc2 14 ♖e1 cxb1 ♖ 15 ♜xb1
♙xd8

In the middlegame three minor pieces are nearly always stronger than the queen. The two extra white pawns are not so important right now. More significant is it that Black has nice play and, as we shall see, White lacks the time to get his pieces to good squares.

16 ♙e3 ♙f6 17 ♖b4 ♜d8 18 ♜fe1 ♙d5

Not 18...♜xa2?? 19 ♙xd4 ♙xd4 20 ♖b3+ and White wins.

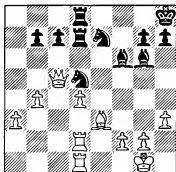
19 ♖c4 ♙c6 20 d4?!

This restricts the bishop and creates a weakness. Much better is 20 ♙f4 ♙a5 (not 20...♙h8?? 21 ♖xd5) 21 ♖c4 ♜a6 with an unclear position.

20...♙f5 21 ♜bd1 ♙h8 22 a3 ♙b6 23 ♖c3 ♜d7!

Now we understand why 20 d4 was a weak move. Black has consolidated his position. So now White has problems, not least that now he can only wait. Active play will be punished.

24 ♜d2 ♜ad8 25 ♜ed1 ♙g6 26 b4 ♙d5
27 ♖c5 ♙ce7



28 g4?

The skill of suffering patiently is worth at least a 100 Elo points. I will quote the first World Champion Wilhelm Steinitz: 'If you have the advantage you should attack, if your position is worse you have to play defensive moves.' Without the weakness at g4 to attack

Black had difficulties in converting a better position to a winning position. White should sit tight with 28 ♜e1.

28...♙xe3 29 fxe3 ♙d5

Now Black is much better – actually it is practically a winning position.

30 ♜e2 ♜e7 31 ♜de1 h6!

Remember to play such moves as this. ...h7-h6 is both useful and safe with several minor functions, but most importantly it throws the ball back to White, who must then ponder over what to do with his position.

32 e4!?

This move seems necessary because of tricks with ...♙xe3, but still it is unpleasant to play.

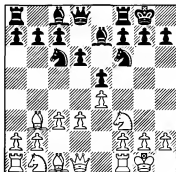
32...♙f4 33 e5 ♙xe2+ 34 ♜xe2 ♙g5 35 d5 ♜ed7 36 e6 ♜xd5 37 ♖xc7 b5 38 e7 ♜e8 39 ♖c6 ♙f7 40 ♜f2?

A mistake in time trouble. But the position was lost anyway.

40...♙e3 0-1

Game 63
Gelashvili-Gokhale
Dubai 2002

1 e4 e5 2 ♙f3 ♙c6 3 ♙c4 ♙f6 4 d3 ♙e7
5 0-0 0-0 6 ♙b3 d6 7 c3



This is one of the main positions in the Two Knights. It is a kind of odd Ruy Lopez without the pawn moves ...a7-a6 and ...b7-b5.

The position should objectively be more or less equal, but in positions like these the best player will win in almost 100% of cases. Robert Fischer said that in the Sicilian Dragon a 2000 player can hope to beat a GM. Here it is impossible. In positions where there are no direct tactics or obvious attacking moves weaker players will fail to place their pieces well and will quickly get into trouble. This game is an illustration of how simple moves can win simply by being more natural.

7...h6

Usually this kind of move looks like a beginner's move. If 7...h6 is played to prepare ...e8 then it makes perfect sense, but Black's idea in the game is not very good. Still almost anything can be played here. Others:

a) 7...g4 (in my opinion this is not as good as Black's other options; ...g4 should only be played when the white pawn is on d4 and the centre is fluid) 8 bbd2 d7 9 h3 h5 10 c2 c5 11 g4 (this is one of the possibilities White gets against an early ...g4; another is e1, f1-g3, though that is a bit slow here) 11...g6 12 d4 exd4 13 cxd4 d7 and after 14 d5 the game was very unclear in the game Hjartarson-Piket, Manila 1992. My recommendation is keep control over the centre with 14 a3 when White is little bit better.

b) 7...a5 8 c2 c5 9 bbd2 c6 10 e1 e8 11 f1 h6 12 h3 f8 13 g3 e6 (after 13...d5 14 exd5 dxd5 15 b3 e6 16 a4! White keeps some pressure) 14 d4 cxd4 15 cxd4 exd4 16 dxd4 d7 17 xxd4 d7 18 f4 with a slight advantage to White in Kobalija-Atalik, Istanbul 2003.

Also interesting is 9 b4!? cxb4 10 cxb4 c6 11 b5 a5 12 d4 (or 12 h3 d7 13 a4 c7 14 b2 and the game is unclear) 12...exd4 13 dxd4 d7 14 d2 c8 15 b2 g4 16 a4 f6 with active play for Black in Kramnik-J.Polgar, Moscow 1996.

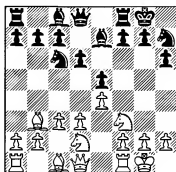
c) 7...e6 8 a4 d7 9 d4 exd4 10 cxc6

bxc6 11 dxd4 c5 12 cxc6 fxc6 13 b3 f6 14 f4 with a slight edge for White in Yudasin-Klovans, Kostroma 1985.

d) 7...d7 8 e3 c5 9 cxc5 dxc5 10 d5 d6 11 cxc6 bxc6 12 bbd2 a6 13 c2 and White was better in Kramnik-Meister, Kuibishev 1990.

e) 7...h8 8 bbd2 g8 9 d4 f6 10 dxc5 cxc5 11 cxc5 dxc5 12 c4 e6 13 c2 xxd1 14 xxd1 ad8 15 xxd8 xxd8 16 c6 fxe6 17 f1 and White is slightly better in this ending according to Magomedov.

8 bbd2 d7?



This idea seems to both too slow and positionally unjustified. If ...f7-f5 the squares around the black king will be weak, while ...h7-g5 loses a lot of time merely to exchange pieces of even value. 8...e8 is the better move here, vacating f8 is for the bishop. After 9 e1 f8 10 h3 e6 11 a4 d7 12 f1 d7 13 c2 g6 14 d4 c5 15 g3 cxd4 16 cxd4 c8 the position was about equal in Gelfand-Onischuk, Groningen 1996.

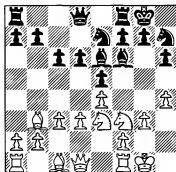
9 c4 f6?!

If Black wants to place the bishop on f6, it was better to play 7...d7. Now the knight on h7 is unemployed. Instead if 9...g5 10 cxc5 cxc5 11 f4! exf4 12 cxf4 e6 13 c3 cxf4 14 cxf4 and White is slightly better.

10 e3 e7 11 h4!

This is a strong prophylactic move, pre-

venting ... Qh7-g5 .
 11... Le6 12 g3 c6



13 Qh2!

White regroups his pieces based on the weakened light squares. The obvious idea is Wf3 , Qh2-g4 and Qc3-f5 with an attack!

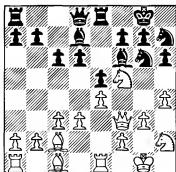
13... $\text{Le8?!$

Black is just waiting here. Better is 13... Lxb3 14 axb3 d5 with the idea ... Wc7 , ... Lf8 and the knight on h7 can rejoin the struggle via the f8-square.

14 Lc2

White decides to keep this bishop for later.

14... Lh3 15 Le1 Qg6 16 Wf3 Ld7 17 Qf5



White stands much better. Black has no counterplay and his minor pieces have no way of getting active.

17... Le7 18 Qg4 Le8 19 d4!

Now all the black pieces are misplaced. White opens the game to exploit it with direct tactics. The game suddenly becomes very concrete, but no matter what Black does, the lines do not work in his favour.

19... exd4

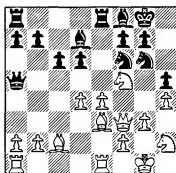
If 19... Wc7 20 Lb3 Le6 21 d5 cxd5 (or 21... Ld7 22 dxc6 Lxc6 23 Le3 and White is much better) 22 exd5 Ld7 23 Lc2! with an attack.

20 cxd4 Wa5 21 Le3 h5?

This looks bad, but Black has no easy choices here. After 21... d5 22 e5 Lxf5 23 Wxf5 White retains strong pressure. Probably best was 21... Lad8 waiting for a better future and allowing White the chance to mess up the attack.

22 Qh2 Qf6

The only way to defend the h5-pawn.



23 Qh6+!

Now the tactics start to arise – as they always do when the pieces are well placed.

23... gxh6 24 Wxf6 Le6 25 Wf3 Lg7 26 a3!

There is no reason to rush things. Black's game is a positional ruin which he finds very hard to improve.

26... Wb5 27 Lb1 Wc4 28 Wd1! Le7 29 Ld3 We6 30 Wxh5

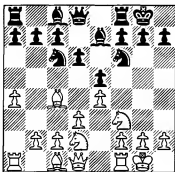
Now besides having a clearly better position, White has an extra pawn too.

30... Lh7 31 f4 Wb3 32 Lbd1 f5 33 exf5 Qxf4 34 gxf4 Lxe3 35 Lxe3 Lxd4 1-0

Resignation was a sensible decision. After 36 f6+ mate comes in no more than four moves.

Game 64
Kovchan-Malaniuk
Swidnica 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♖f6 4 d3 ♙e7
5 0-0 0-0 6 ♘bd2 d6 7 a4



The white play here differs somewhat from the Ruy Lopez, as White goes for a space advantage on the queenside straight away, while also preserving his bishop against exchange by ...♗a5.

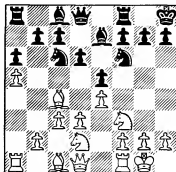
7...♗h8

Intending ...♘g8 and ...f7-f5 with counterplay. Also possible is 7...♙e6 8 ♙e1 ♖d7 9 c3 ♗fe8 10 ♗b3 ♗f8 11 a5 ♙xb3 12 ♖xb3 a6 13 ♘f1 d5 14 ♗g5 dxe4 15 dxe4 ♖e6 and position is equal, Grosar-Gostisa, Slovenia 1994. Inadvisable is 8...♙xc4? forcing White to complete his development by 9 ♘c4 and then White is slightly better according to Michael Adams; put simply, Black exchanged his good bishop and his position is now solid but rather passive.

8 a5 a6

The alternative 8...♗b8?, intending ...b7-b5, is an interesting new idea, which can be compared with 6 ♙e1 d6 7 a4 ♗h8 8 a5 ♗b8 in Game 66.

9 c3



In positions like this Black has only two plans and both involve pawn breaks: to play ...d6-d5 or ...f7-f5. In most cases ...f7-f5 is better. First of all the pawn because the e5-pawn retains its defence, and secondly, Black can make good use of the f-file for attacking purposes.

9...♘g8

Interesting is also 9...♘h5!. This active move is possible because 10 ♘xe5?? fails to 10...♙xc5 11 ♖xh5 ♙g4 and the queen is lost. Therefore White should choose between 10 ♙e1 ♘f4 with the initiative, and 10 d4 exd4 11 cxd4 ♘f4 12 ♘b3 f5! 13 e5 dxe5 (13...d5! is completely unclear) 14 dxe5 ♙e6 15 ♙xe6 ♘xe6 and the ending is more or less equal.

10 d4 exd4

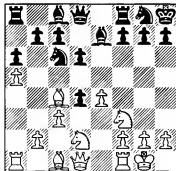
This is a good sound move, but Black could also play very energetically with 10...f5! when White has two main moves:

a) 11 dxe5 dxe5 (remember this! – when the white knights are on f3 and d2 and thereby taking each others squares, and White at the same time has less space, Black should not exchange pieces) 12 ♙d5! ♙f6 13 ♙xc6 (removing the knight before Black supports it with ...♘ge7) 13...bxc6 14 ♖e2 f4 15 b3 g5! 16 ♘c4 (if 16 h3 g4 17 hxg4 ♙xg4 with unclear play) 16...♖e8 17 ♙a3 ♗f7 18 ♗fd1 g4 19 ♘e1 ♗g7 and here Black has the initiative while White has a better pawn structure. In positions like this I prefer play-

ing the black pieces, but this is a matter of taste; White has his own chances. Except that in blitz games – which we all seem mainly to play these days – attacking is much more effective than defence. Of course this is not true if you are Petrosian arisen from he dead for one last round in the ring.

Black has also some compensation after 11...fxe4 12 exd6 ♖xd6 13 ♜xe4 ♜g6 14 ♜eg5? ♜xg5 15 ♜xg5 h6 16 ♜f3 ♜g4 17 ♜d3 ♜h5 and the pressure will get stronger, or if 14 ♜d3 ♜f5 15 ♜e1 ♜ad8 with counterplay. But this is of course quite complicated and risky; additional investigation of the position can be recommended for those with enough time on their hands.

b) 11 d5 ♜b8 12 exf5 ♜xf5 13 ♜e1 ♜f6 14 ♜b3 ♜c8 (also strong is 14...♜bd7!? 15 ♜xb7 ♜c5 16 ♜b4 ♜d3 17 ♜a2 ♜g6 and Black has good compensation for the pawn; maybe 15 ♜g5 is an improvement in this line) 15 ♜d4!? exd4 16 ♜xe7 d3! and Black's chances looks good, although the position is very unclear; e.g. 17 ♜f3 ♜bd7 18 ♜g5 ♜c5 19 ♜d1 ♜fe4 with a complex struggle.



11 cxd4?!

After this the pawn will be weak on d4, and Black will be able to put up a strong blockade of the centre while attacking on the kingside. Better was 11 ♜xd4 ♜xd4 12 cxd4 f5 13 e5 dxe5 14 dxe5 ♜d4 15 ♜e1 ♜d7! 16 ♜c2 ♜c6, though Black still has good play.

11...f5 12 e5

12 ♜b3 fxe4 13 ♜xe4 is probably mostly strongly met with 13...♜xf3! (also possible is 13...♜f6 14 ♜xf6 ♜xf6 15 d5 ♜e5 16 ♜e2 ♜e7 and question is whether White can keep the balance or not) 14 gxh3 (if 14 ♜xf3 d5 15 ♜g5 ♜xg5 16 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 17 ♜xd5 ♜f6 and Black is better) 14...♜xd4 15 ♜d3 ♜c6 with excellent play for the exchange. Most attacking players would prefer Black here. Fritz 8 thinks the position is quickly 0.00 – sometimes I wonder how it is that it often gets to 0.00 in messy positions – but then after some time White declines to -0.03, which of course is basically the same.

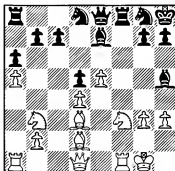
12...d5 13 ♜d3 f4! 14 ♜b3 ♜g4 15 h3

This does not look good, but is necessary. Black has a very simple plan: ...♜d7 and ...♜d8-e6 with a superior position.

15...♜h5 16 g4

White has no choice. After others move he runs the very likely risk of losing without a fight.

16...fxg3 17 fxg3 ♜e8 18 ♜d2 ♜d8!



Black executes his simple plan. A blocking knight has been famous ever since Nimzowitsch wrote *Blockade* almost a century ago, and it now forms part of the basics for any serious chess player.

19 ♜g2 ♜g6 20 ♜c2 ♜xd3 21 ♜xd3 ♜e6 22 h4?

Moves like these are always bad. Remember the Steinitz quote earlier in this chapter! Here White wants to take control of g5 and

play Qf3-g5 with some offensive ideas. But this is unrealistic, while the weakening of the light squares is very real. Instead, after the solid 22 f2! White can think about the future.

22... Wh5

The light squares around the white king are going to create a (k)nightmare.

23 Ag5 Aae8

If $23... \text{Ag5}$ 24 Qxg5 25 hxg5 Wxg5 26 Qc5 and White has some compensation for the pawn, though Black is still better after $26... \text{Wg4}$.

24 Axe7 Qxe7 25 Qg5

If 25 Aac1 Qf5 26 Qg5 Wg6! and the unprotected queen gives White problems; after 27 Ah1 Qxg5 28 hxg5 Wxg5 and Black is close to winning.

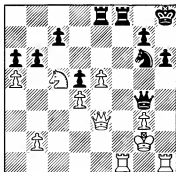
25... Qxg5 26 hxg5 Wxg5 27 Qc5 Wg4 28 Ah1

Not 28 Qxb7 Qg6 29 Qc5 Af4! and Black wins.

28... Qg6 29 Af1 h6?

Black is wasting time on luxury moves. His chances were here right now and should have been milked. The right path was $29... \text{Af4!}$ 30 Axh7+ Ah8! 31 Ah2 Axd4 and Black wins.

30 We3! b6



31 Qxa6?

A tactical error which is easy to understand, as White's defensive task is extensive. Instead, after 31 axb6 cxb6 32 Qxa6 Ac8 33

Qb4 Axf1 34 Axf1 Ac4 35 Qxd5 Wxd4 36 Wxd4 Axd4 37 Qxb6 Qxe5 38 Af4! White is able to make a draw, if only just; e.g. $38... \text{Ad2+}$ 39 Af2 Axf2+ 40 Ah2 Qd3+ 41 Ah3! Qxb2 42 Qd2 Ah7 43 Ah2 Ag6 44 Ah2 Af5 45 Qd5 Ag4 46 Qc3+ Ahg3 47 Qf5+ and draws.

31... c5! 32 Axf8+

Or 32 dxc5 $d4$ 33 Wd2 Axf1 34 Axf1 Axe5 and Black wins.

$32... \text{Axf8}$ 33 Af1 Axf1 34 Axf1 cxd4 35 We2 Wf5+ 36 Ag2 bxa5 37 e6 d3 38 e7 Qxe7 39 Wxe7 d2 40 We8+ Ah7 41 We2 Wc2 $0-1$

Game 65

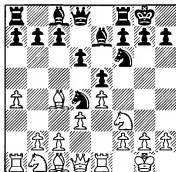
Macieja-Ivanchuk

Hyderabad 2002

1 e4 e5 2 Qf3 Qc6 3 Ac4 Qf6 4 d3 Ae7 5 0-0 $0-0$ 6 Ae1 d6 7 a4

This plan seems more flexible than 6 Qbd2 . The knight can also move to the kingside via a3-c2-c3 .

7... Qd4!?



A double edged move. More natural is $7... \text{Ah8}$ which is considered in Game 66.

8 Qxd4 exd4 9 Qd2

Also possible is 9 c3 dxc3 10 Qxc3 c6 $11 \text{ Wb3?!$ (better is 11 d4 with equality $11... \text{Qg4!}$ 12 d4 Ah4 13 g3 Wf6 14 Ac2 Wg6 15 Ah1 Ah6 and Black's initiative was very dangerous in Nevednichy-Tseshkovsky, Igalo

1994. After 16 f3 ♙xd4 17 fxc4 ♙xg4 18 ♚g2 ♙f3 Black kept the advantage.

9... ♜g4 ?!

The knight is not very well placed here. Better was 9... ♙g4 ? 10 f3 ♙e6 11 ♙xc6 fxe6 12 e5 (if 12 f4 d5 13 e5 ♜e8 14 ♚g4 ♚d7 15 ♜f3 c5 16 b4 cxb4 17 ♜xd4 ♙c5 18 ♙e3 ♜c7 and the game is more or less equal) 12... ♜d5 13 ♜c4 and Macieja believes that White has a small advantage here. However, with a strong knight on d5 and the half-open f-file as well as the weak dark squares in the white camp, Black has good reasons to hope for good counterplay: 13...dxe5 14 ♚xe5 (or 14 ♜xc5 ♙g5) 14... ♚d7 15 ♚e2 ♚ac8 16 ♚xe6 ♙g5 ! 17 ♚e5 ♙xc1 18 ♚xc1 ♚xa4 and Black is OK.

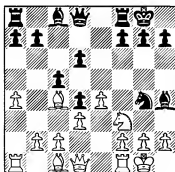
10 ♜f3 ♙h4 ?!

Better is 10...c5 when White has only a slight advantage.

11 ♚f1 !

Black has been hoping to provoke 11 g3?! when after 11... ♙f6 12 a5 c6 13 ♙b3 ♚e8 the light squares around the white king are quite weak, so Black is OK.

11...c5



12 ♜xh4 ?

Why White wants to bring the black queen to h4 is not clear. Instead 12 h3 and there is no comfort for Black in 12... ♜e5 (even worse is 12... ♙xf2 ? 13 ♚xf2 ♜xf2 14 ♜xf2 ♙e6 15 ♙d5 ♙xd5 16 exd5 ♚f6 17 ♚d2 and White will win this ending sooner

or later) 13 ♜xe5 dxe5 14 ♚h5 ♙f6 15 f4 ♚c7 16 f5 and White is much better.

12... ♚xh4 13 ♙f4 ♜e5 14 ♙g3 ♚e7 15 b3

15 ♙d5 is answered by 15... ♙g4 ? 16 f3 ♙e6 blocking the d1–h5 diagonal with equal play.

15... ♜xc4 16 bxc4 ♙d7

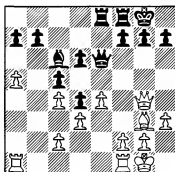
Better 16...f5! 17 exf5 ♙xf5 18 ♚e1 ♚d7 and the position is equal.

17 a5 ♙c6 !?

Black is wasting too much time. Better again was 17...f5 18 exf5 ♙xf5 19 ♚e1 though Black must play very carefully in order to keep the balance: 19... ♙e6 ! (the most important thing is to control the f3-square; if 19... ♚d7 20 a6 b6 21 ♚f3 and White is slightly better) 20 ♚d2 ♚ae8 with equality.

18 ♚g4 ♚ae8 19 ♚f4 ♚e5 20 ♚g4 ♚e6 21 h3?!

Better was 21 f3 and White retains a small edge according to Macieja.



21...f6

After 21... ♚xg4 ?! 22 hxg4 ♚d8 23 g5 ♚d7 24 ♚fc1 ♚e8 25 f4 White has full control over the position. Perhaps a draw is a realistic hope, but Black should be prepared for 50 moves of hard fight in order to survive. Black could still have tried 21...f5!? and after 22 exf5 ♙xf5 23 ♙xd6 h5 24 ♚g3 ♚h6 ! 25 ♚ae1 ! (if 25 ♚h2 ♚c2 with a strong attack) 25... ♙xe1 26 ♚xc1 ♙g5 27 ♚f4 ♙xg2 + 28 ♜f1 the game is completely unclear.

22 ♖f4 ♜e5 23 ♖d2 ♜e6 24 ♖f4 ♜e5
25 ♖d2 ♜e6 26 ♙h2?!

Better was 26 ♙a1 and White has a slight advantage.

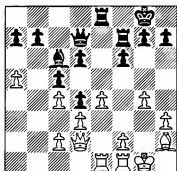
26...♙f7?!

Again 26...f5! leads to equality. Ivanchuk seems to have made a conscious decision not to consider this move.

27 ♙a1 ♖d7

If 27...♙f7 28 g4! and White maintains strong pressure on the black position.

28 g4



28...h5?!

Old rules says that if your opponent is attacking on the flank you should play in the centre; if that is impossible, you should prepare counterplay on the other side of board. Thus 28...b5! 29 axb6 axb6 30 ♖b1 b5 31 cxb5 ♙xb5 32 ♙xd6 ♙xd3 33 cxd3 ♖xd6 34 ♙fc1 and now White has switched to the queenside, then 34...h5! with counterplay on the other wing.

29 ♖f4 hxg4

29...♙a4! is best met with 30 ♙c1! and White keeps the advantage. But not 30 ♖xd6? ♖xd6 31 ♙xd6 ♙xc2 32 ♙xc5 ♙xd3 and Black wins material, or 30 ♙c2? hxg4 31 hxg4 f5! with terrific counterplay.

30 hxg4 ♙e6

30...♙a4!? was still possible.

31 ♙g3 ♜e8 32 ♖d2 g6 33 f3

Not 33 f4? f5! 34 exf5 gxf5 35 ♙xc6 ♖xc6 36 g5 ♖c3+ 37 ♖xe3 dxe3 38 ♙e1 ♙e7 and

it is Black who has the winning chances!

33...♙h7 34 ♙f2 ♖f7

34...b5 is of course risky, but quite necessary. White is much better after 35 cxb5 ♙xb5 36 f4, but Black has some real chances to survive and that is what matters.

35 ♙h1 ♖g7 36 ♙xh7 ♖xh7 37 ♖c1 ♙f7
38 ♙h1 ♖g7 39 g5! ♙e8

If 39...fxg5 40 ♖xg5 ♖f6 41 ♙h7+ ♙g8 42 ♖h6 (with the deadly threat of ♙h4) 42...g5 43 ♙h8+! and White wins.

40 ♙h6

Now the attack is killing.

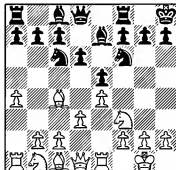
40...♙d7 41 ♖h1 ♙e7 42 gxf6 ♖xf6 43 ♙h4 ♖f4 44 ♙xe7 ♙xe7 45 ♖h4+ 1-0

Game 66

Macieja-Pinski

Polanica Zdroj 1999

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♖c6 3 ♙c4 ♖f6 4 d3 ♙e7
5 0-0 0-0 6 ♙e1 d6 7 a4 ♙h8



With similar ideas as after 6 ♖bd2 d6 7 a4 ♙h8 in Game 64.

8 a5

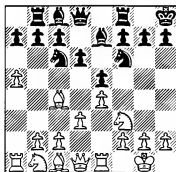
Or 8 c3 ♖g8 when White has tried:

a) 9 d4 ♙g4 10 dxe5 (if 10 d5 ♖b8 11 h3 ♙c8! and Black has good counterplay coming with ...f7-f5; this is better than 11...♙xf3 12 ♖xf3 ♙g5 13 a5 a6 14 ♖d2 ♖e7 15 ♖h5 when White's greater space gives him the advantage) 10...♖xe5 (worse is 10...dxe5! 11 ♖bd2 ♙d6 12 a5 a6 13 ♖b3 ♖d7 14 h3

♙h5 15 ♖h4 ♜ge7 16 ♜f1 and White was better in Armas-Adams, France 1991; but 10...♙xf3 11 ♖xf3 ♜xe5 12 ♖e2 ♜xc4 13 ♖xc4 f5 14 ♜d2 fxe4 15 ♖xc4 d5 16 ♖d3 ♜f6 was also OK in Tiitta-Sepp, Finland 1997) 11 ♙e2 ♙xf3 12 ♙xf3 ♙g5 13 ♙e2 ♙xc1 14 ♖xc1 ♖h4 15 ♜d2 (or 15 ♖c3 f5 16 cx f5 ♜h6 17 ♜d2 ♜xf5 with good counterplay for Black) 15...♙a8 with equality in Armas-Hebden, France 1991.

b) 9 a5 a6 (weaker is 9...f5? 10 a6 fxe4 11 dxe4 bxa6 12 ♙xa6 and the weak pawn on a7 gives White the advantage; but 9...♙b8! is stronger in my opinion – it is always better to prepare ...b7-b5 this way, as then if 10 a6 Black has counterplay with 10...b5!) 10 d4 (10 ♜bd2 f5 11 ♖b3 was interesting) 10...♙g4 11 d5 ♜b8 (as in Macieja-Johansson, Bermuda 2002) 12 ♙d3! ♜d7 13 b4 and White is slightly better according to Macieja.

8...♙b8!



Of course the '!' is only my own opinion, but I sincerely believe that the pawn is better kept on a7.

9 c3 ♙g4 10 ♜bd2 d5 11 exd5 ♜xd5 12 h3 ♙h5 13 ♜e4

White, as usual, was offered the central pawn. But the costs are high, i.e. 13 g4 ♙g6 14 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♖xe5 c6 and Black has good compensation.

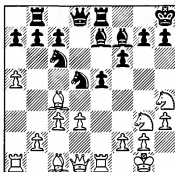
13...f6 14 ♜g3

In 1999 this was a new move to theory, but not to me. I has analysed the position after 8...♙b8 a few weeks earlier.

14...♙f7 15 ♜h4

15 ♜f5 ♙c5! is fine for Black. If 16 b4? ♜xc3 17 ♖b3 ♙xc4 18 dxc4 ♙xb4 19 ♙b2 ♖d3! and Black wins.

15...♙e8!



This simple move was shown to me before the game by my coach Wojciech Ehrenfeucht (we both played in the Polish Championship that year). The idea is simple: ...♙f8 and the white attack is over.

16 ♜hf5 ♙f8 17 ♖b3 ♖d7 18 ♜e3 ♙ed8 19 ♜xd5 ♙xd5 20 ♙e3 b5 21 axb6 axb6 22 ♖c2 ½-½

I had planned to play 22...♜a5! (but not 22...♙xc4?! 23 dxc4 ♖d3 24 ♖a4 ♜a5 25 c5 and White is slightly better) 23 ♙xd5 ♖xd5 24 ♙ad1 c5 where Black has more space, but the position is nothing more than equal.

Summary

4 d3 is not a dangerous move. Black should equalise in all lines – with the exception perhaps of 4...d5!?, which is interesting and fun to play, but inadequate for equality. The usual move is 4...c5 gives Black a safe position, while 4...h6!? leads to a more complicated game with good chances for a long and hard fight. And if you are happy in the quiet lines of the Italian Game, there is also 4...c5.

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 c4 f6 4 d3 (D) e7

4...c5 – Italian Game

4...h6 – Game 58

4...d5 – Game 59

5 0-0 0-0 6 e1

6 c3 d5 – Game 60

6 e3

6...d5 7 exd5 dxd5 (D)

8 e1 – Game 61; 8 h3 – Game 62

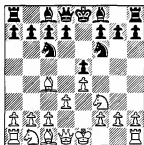
6...d6 7 c3 – Game 63

6 dbd2 d6 7 a4 h8 – Game 64

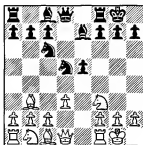
6...d6 7 a4 (D)

7...d4 – Game 65

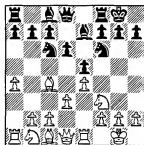
7...h8 – Game 66



4 d3



7...dxd5



7 a4

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the two knights defence

The Two Knights Defence is one of the trickiest tactical openings around. If White initiates complications with either 4 Ng5 or 4 d4, play becomes extremely sharp and gambits and counter gambits abound. Anyone who enters the murky waters of the Two Knights Defence must be well prepared for the mind-boggling complications that ensue. In this book, openings theoretician Jan Pinski guides the reader through both the well-trodden paths of the main lines plus the less fashionable side variations of this most complex opening. Using illustrative games, Pinski studies the key ideas and tactics for both Black and White.

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